

BAHISHKRIT BHARAT

*A Newspaper in Marathi
Founded by
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar
in April 1927*

*Translated into English by
Dr. B. R. Kamble*

PART TWO

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar
Research Institute in Social Growth
Kolhapur

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(Untouchable India)

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&

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Dr. Appasaheb Pawar

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a Champion of Mass Education,
a Scholar & a Chief Architect of
Shivaji University, Kolhapur

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- Prof. B. R. Kamble

INTRODUCTION

Having founded the Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha in July, 1924 in Bombay Dr. Ambedkar speeded up the activities of the Sabha towards the goal of educating, organizing and agitating of the so called untouchables for their liberation from their age old slavery from which they were suffering in Hindu society. The untouchables formed almost 1/5th of the total population and they led the segregated life living away from the main stream of Hindu Society as untouchables. Their very touch was abomination and polluting to the rest of the Hindus. Since they lived in Slavish condition socially, morally and mentally they had become almost moribund for ages together. The sense of self-respect and self-help had died out from the species of their blood. In whatever condition they were placed is their fate accomplish was the lesson of religion that they followed since hoary past. In his letter of appeal which Dr. Ambedkar published after founding the Sabha was very much thought provoking explaining the basic structure of Hindu Society. The letter said the following:

“In Hindu religion the Society has been organized on two basic eternal principles. One is merit-Demerit by birth and another is purity- Impurity by birth. Hindu Society formed on these two ideas divides itself into three divisions of people. The first class is of those who are called as Brahmins and are regarded as most superior and holy. The second class is of Non-Brahmins who are by birth lower to the Brahmins but they are not impure by birth. The third division is of those who are by birth lowest and impure. They are treated as out-

castes and branded as "Untouchables." This birth based system is beneficial to some and baneful to others. Under this birth based system of social condition the man born in first social class remains superior to all however degraded human being he may be. Hence all the means and the ways of his progress remain open to him. The Non-Brahmins also suffers certain religious disabilities temporarily but they are in huge majority and in day to day practice they do not suffer much from those disabilities. Therefore, the ways and means of acquiring knowledge and wealth are open to them. Hence with the help of knowledge and wealth the Non-Brahmins are bound to be superior to all today or tomorrow. The condition of untouchables is opposed to all this. They are placed in a precarious condition since they are regarded as by birth impure and incompetent. For many years they too have been regarding themselves as impure and incompetent and this has caused the loss of their sense of self-help and self-respect which are the real factors of human progress. From social point of view they do not enjoy the equal rights with other Hindus. They cannot use public schools, public water tanks or wells, in some places even the public roads and also the public conveyances. Trade, agriculture and employment in government and other fields are the means of earning wealth but because of the stamp of impurity and inability put on them the roads to these avenues of earning are closed to them since very touch of these people is forbidden by the socio-religious practices."

It is said that under the English rule all are treated equally under their rule of law but it is not so in case of the disabilities imposed on the untouchables by the high caste Hindus. Therefore, it is rarely helpful in protecting the rights of the depressed classes. Under such difficult circumstances what is most essential to bring about the progress of the untouchables is to bring about awakening among them at any cost. Their awakening will make them wrathful against the causes of their suffering and at the same time their rightful efforts strengthen the causes of their progress. In short the

untouchables by searching out the causes of their degradation should work to replace those causes with the causes of their progress and go on by strengthening the causes of the progress. At present only way out for them is to perform some manual type of work of both the government and the villages and remain satisfied with the paltry some gains which is as good as beggary.

Among the existing social organizations that are working at present there is not a single organization which gives priority to the problems of the untouchables. When this is so then the question of wedding entirely to the cause of untouchables does not arise before them. Hence there is a need of an organization which can devote entirely to the problems of the untouchables. To meet this need some mindful people of untouchable communities by coming together have formed an association called Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha.

The argument that political reform first then the social reform is worthless and it has now been proved unacceptable beyond any measure. Today, after doing so much politics if there is anything that is coming in the way of politics it is the social problems. The social problems are such important problems that whatever efforts one may make to keep them aside they appear again and again for the confrontation of the politicians. The politicians who took only the politics in their hands keeping the social problems aside found ultimately that they have achieved nothing. On the contrary it made the politics more difficult. Otherwise the confrontation and quarrel which we see to-day would not have been there. To end this quarrel and confrontation we must make efforts to end the social injustice prevailing in society. This is the moral duty of each individual in our society. If a group of people remains backward the effect of its backwardness is bound to affect the whole society in the country. The society is like a boat. If a voyager for making fun of others strikes a hole in his room of the boat sooner or later he will also sink along with all others and end his life. The population of untouchable

communities is not a small population. It is almost 1/5th of the total population in the country. So long as such a big population is leading a miserable life the country is bound to remain backward.

We are, therefore, communicating by this appeal letter to our own countrymen as well as to others that the untouchable community has remained backward in all walks of life. It has remained backward in education, it has remained backward in wealth, and it has remained backward in self-power and self-help. The people of this community suffer from social, political and economic inequality and injustice beyond any imagination. These people are deeply caught in their ignorance which is deep rooted in them. How to come out of this miserable condition is their dilemma which they are unable to understand. Ultimately Dr. Ambedkar appealed all those who understand the causes of the degradation and misery of so called untouchables to come forward to help them thinking it as their moral duty to help "Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha which has come into existence to struggle to achieve this aim."

To promote education, to produce awakening among the untouchables and to strengthen the organization of Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha the work of organizing the public meetings under the auspicious of Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha particularly all over the presidency of Bombay had begun vigorously. Babasaheb Ambedkar by remaining present almost in every meeting used to address these meetings. His speeches full of information, vision and forthrightness began inspiring the untouchable communities beyond imagination.

The Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha met at Nipani on 10th and 11th April 1925 for its third annual conference under the chairmanship of Babasaheb Ambedkar. He advised the members of the untouchable community to grow in them the spirit of self-help, determination and struggle against their age-old slavery.

In his speech further he underlined the policy of his

struggle by stating that by side-tracking the social reform the political reform cannot succeed in this country. The leaders of the country made this mistake so far and hence the problems like Brahmin-Non-Brahmin, Touchable-Untouchable and Hindu-Muslim surface again and again and stand in the path of National politics. He asserted that the Satyagraha at Vaikom in Kerala to throw open the road leading to the temple for the use of the untouchables is a very happy change in this matter. It is a very healthy change that Mahatma Gandhi saying that social reform is a part of politics has appeared on the scene of Indian politics for the first times though there are some problems in his approach. The kind of tress that he gives on the use of Khadi and the problem of Hindu and Muslim unity the same is not given on the problem of eradication of untouchability. He is firmly determined that if there is no spinning of yarn there is no right to vote, he would have similarly added that if there is no work for eradication of untouchability there is no entry to the congress organization. Any way where there is no sympathy from any corner there at least he says something about this problem. However the Brahmin Pandits at Vaikom remained firm on the non-entry of untouchables on the forbidden road and the movement of Satyagraha ended without any gain.

He explained further that, "though I have not studied the Hindu Shastras in depth yet I feel that the Shastras support the practice of untouchability by the high caste Hindus. The government should have confiscated these Shastras long back. We are not advocating that everybody who is rich should be made poor by confiscating his wealth. We are demanding our equal rights with others. But the Hindu religious scriptures are coming in our way to gain our just rights. We are subjected to serious injustice, heavy social pressure and contemptuous treatment yet we are enduring all that meekly. The tragedy is that we are neither unhappy, nor aware of it nor do we feel angry over all this. What is the reason for this suffering meekly? The reason is that we are without knowledge and necessary understanding and another is that we are without

strength and power. Had we punished those who deprived our humanity at an appropriate time we would not have fallen on these evil days now and we would not have been the beggars in this land of honey. Our misery is that instead of resisting we are following the old ways of slavery and are heading towards in our condition from bad to worst. Our slavish mentality is equally responsible for degradation. The world is changing. You must also change. Give up your old traditions, wear clean clothes, give up dirty habits, give up the practices like child marriage, send the children to the school compulsorily and allow them to grow in a new healthy and changing atmosphere” was his message.

This speech made a tremendous impact on people. They contributed money to start a boy's hostel at Belgaum and a young man Shri B.H.Varale took the responsibility of running the hostel. The hostel was later shifted to Dharwar in 1929. After some days the hostels were opened at Jalgaon and Panvel. The beginning was already made in Solapur in this regard.

Right from the beginning of his public life Babasaheb did not think that there is any substance in the work of the organizations started by the caste Hindus to eradicate the practice of untouchability. He always tried to keep his movement and the untouchables away from them.

A glaring example of this view that can be noticed from the very early career of his public life in his speech that he had made in the conference of Mahars of Satara district held at Rahimatpur in May 1926. He was the president of this conference. In the meeting Babasaheb narrated the details about the Mahar Vatan and then some resolutions were passed in the conference. One resolution was that the government should appoint qualified persons from among the depressed classes as justice of peace. This resolution was opposed by Shri. Ramchandra G. Soman (pleader). His argument was that there is going on a struggle for freedom in the country. The titles and honors given by the British

government are being surrendered as a part of freedom struggle. Under the circumstances asking for the titles like justice of peace from the government is an affront to the freedom struggle that is going on in the country, and opposed this resolution. Gandhiji started Non-cooperation movement in August 1920. The use of Indian made goods, surrendering the titles given by the British Government and the National education was the programme of the Non-cooperation which the Indian National congress had launched against the British Government in India. Even Muslims with their Khilafat movement had also joined the Non-cooperation movement. Shri Soman had this movement in his mind while opposing the resolution of demanding the titles like justice of peace for the deserving members of the untouchable's community.

After Soman's speech Dr. Ambedkar abruptly stood up and spoke the following rather angrily. He said that "some high class people among the Hindus particularly the Brahmins by suppressing their own countrymen in the name of the religion have successfully led a luxurious life during the ancient rule of the Hindus, medieval rule of the Muslims and now under the English rule of the British. Not only this but it is these high caste men who have enslaved some of their countrymen and have perpetuated that slavery for five thousand years. And now it is these men who are shouting against the political slavery. It is these people by coming together under the flag of the congress party for the sake of political freedom are prepared to undergo corporal punishment. It is these people who are not prepared to grant social and religious equality to the so called untouchables. It is these people who have harmed the interest of the common man in this country beyond any measure. If anybody wants historical evidences for my statement I am prepared to give that in ample measure. If anybody wants to say anything against my arguments let him say that I am prepared to refute his arguments. Power and wealth are the means towards progress. As the untouchables will go on acquiring these two weapons in their hands they will go on making progress.

Acquiring titles like JP or any other such means of power is a key to their progress and we must make efforts to acquire these weapons. Those who say that we should remain away from such weapon they play the game of deceiving us. This is their effort to keep us where we are. Soman and his caste men have harassed the untouchables and the non-Brahmins for over five thousand years. Untouchables are lowest and the non-Brahmins are low in social scale are the ideas that the Brahmins got incorporated into the Dharma shatras and got these ideas legally translated into practice through the rulers in the past. Love for the country is the virtue only of the Brahmins and hence the Brahmins are undergoing all kinds of rigorous punishment is their argument. When Non-Brahmins and untouchables come forward to undergo these punishments they ask them that they should stay away. You do not understand politics. All important positions in the government are in the hands of the Brahmins. When non-Brahmins and the untouchables try to enter into this field they say that they are not fit for these positions. This way whether it is religion or politics we are the only fit people to occupy important positions has been the assertion of the Brahmins from olden days. Therefore they have become mentally arrogant and intellectually corrupt. Afraid of these two qualities of the Brahmins both Non-Brahmins and the untouchables have been meekly suffering under their arrogance. Now both these communities have realized the genuine causes of their suffering. If they come together and struggle soon they will be free from the thralldom of Brahmanism under which they are suffering for ages together. However this eventuality is impossible to take place. Though the people like the Marathas, praise the song of Satyashodhak ideology they in their thought and action are the slaves of Brahmanical practices both in their thought and behavior. Our untouchable community is expecting the Marathas to lead them. My advice to the untouchables is that they should not accept anybody's slavery. I have my-self freed from the slavery of Brahmanism. Brahmins always try to become the leaders of each community. I regard it as my moral duty to

keep the untouchables away from their mischievous leadership. I am a stick in the hands of my people who are blind and deaf. If they learn to walk with the support of this stick they will not fall into the ditches dug by the leaders like Soman."

From the foundation of Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha in July 1924 to the Mahad conference in March 1927 during these three years Babasaheb moved from place to place particularly in Bombay presidency including Vidarbha organizing the public meetings particularly of the untouchables addressing them on the importance of the education of their children, following the path of self-help, imbibing the spirit of self-respect and the struggle for the right of socio-religious equality in Hindu society. His knowledge, courage of conviction and his urge to fight for the liberation of suppressed humanity had begun working like the magic wand particularly among the untouchable communities of Bombay presidency.

Dr. Ambedkar was now establishing his reputation as a practicing lawyer at the bar in Bombay high court. There was an event in which some Brahmins from Poona had filed a defamation suit against three Non-Brahmins leaders, K.B.Bagade, Keshavrao Jedhe and Dinkarrao Javalkar. These three leaders were charged that they had published a pamphlet declaring that the Brahmins have ruined India. On the prosecution side was L.B.Bhopatkar, a leading lawyer from Poona. The case came up before the session Judge at Poona for hearing. Ambedkar argued his case very ably on behalf of three Non-Brahmin leaders. He put up the case very eloquently for his clients and won the case in October 1926. Many eyes were fixed on this famous case. The victory was very much re-sounding for both the clients and the lawyer. From this event onwards he rose up before the bar as a lawyer.

Dr. Ambedkar was basically a man of compassion and his compassionate outlook remained exhibited in his legal

profession also. Dr. Dhananjay Keer has very aptly stated that:

“Men of Depressed classes, needy and harassed, came from far and near in search of the poor men’s barrister. Deeply grieved at their sad plight, he heard their grievances with an undisturbed mind, gave them legal advice free, and fought out their cases with great sincerity and industry, with nominal or no charges. He showed utmost geniality in those days towards his people. He treated them with care and cordiality. The poor people were struck with a sense of overwhelming gratitude by his simplicity and sincerity.”*

Ever since the days of his studentship during which he was writing his M.A., and ph.D thesis he had formed the view, out of his studies in Indian society, that the caste system in India which is unknown elsewhere, is the biggest age old problem in the path of the progress of Indian nation. While preparing his research paper “caste And Its Mechanism” to be read in a seminar in Columbia university his studies suggested to him that Indian society was once upon a time exogamous and when certain groups of people converted themselves into endogamous units the castes were formed and once formed went on forming by imitation and then other taboos like ban on inter-dinning followed and spread. In his view, therefore, the inter-caste marriages and inter-dinning among the people must be common practices to end the caste notions and weaken the caste system.

There were associations like Hindu Mahasabha, Arya Samaj, Satya Shodhak Samaj etc. which opposed caste system at least in theory but bringing the ideal in practice was their problem as the workers of these organizations did not come out radically from the conservatism of the caste notions. For this reason an honest man like Swami Shraddhanand had to come out of the Hindu Maha Sabha by quitting from there. It is for these reasons Babasaheb did not think of joining any of these organizations but believed in following his own ideals independently through the organizations founded by him

* Dr. Ambedkar: Life and Mission, P.67

with his followers.

Social Equality League: it was the ideal of Babasaheb that man should always practice what he thinks. Therefore, in persuasion of the idea that charity must begin at home he founded a league called "Social Equality League," to promote the practice of inter-dinning and inter-caste marriages particularly among untouchables who were divided in various sub-castes among whom these practices were forbidden. This league was founded on 4-9-27 and the league immediately took up the programme for propagating inter-dinning and inter-caste marriages. After its foundation Dr. Ambedkar wrote a pamphlet which was published in the paper called "Non Brahmin" dated 16-9-27. The summary of this pamphlet has been given by Khairmode (Marathi) in vol. Two of the biography of Bhimrao Ambedkar. The summary of the pamphlet is as follows:

"The principles of social equality league is as clear as sunlight and as unbreakable as Iron. It is not offraid of anybody. The equality is the foundation of the league and fearlessness is its shield. Those that have these qualities as their shield alone will have courage to join the league. Those that have the ability to discard the castes and notions of high and low can enter the league as its member. Even those who believe in the theory of colour discrimination have no place in the league."

Dr. Ambedkar was the chairman of the league and Dr. R.N.Bhaind, M.B.B.S, and Shri D.V.Naik, Editor "Non-Brahmin Paper", were the vice- Chairmen. Other Members of the working committee were (1) Shri S.S.Gupte, B.sc. and Shri B.V.Pradhan B.A. secretaries. Shri R.D.Kavali, B.A. Treasure.

The members of the executive committee were:

1. Mr. F.D.Silva, B.A.
2. Shri V.R. Chonakar, B.A.
3. Shri D. Vithalrao prathan
4. Shri P.P.Tamhane, B.A.
5. Shri R.G. Pratapgiri, B.A; Hon.

6. Shri J.P.Muley and

7. Shri N.V.Khandake

Shri D.B.Subhedar, ACRF and Shri R.M.Karnik, B.A. were the auditors of the league.

Among these members majority was from the high caste Hindus and all these members were wedded to the ideology of the league.

Principles and Aims

1. The league is founded with the belief that all human beings are equal and that they are entitled to equal Opportunities for the realization of their personality and the enrichment of their life.

2. The league further assents that this right to equality is sacred, inalienable and inviolable.

3. The league believes that this right to equality is the birth right of every human being irrespective of race, creed, caste and sex.

4. The league also believes that without the establishment of social equality, a harmonious social life is not possible.

5. The league protests that all Ideas, activities and institutions that work or result in such a disharmony are a negation of the principle of social equality.

6. Our league aims at the realization of all the above principles by all possible means.

This draft of the league with its aims and objectives along with its office bearers and executive members was authored by Babasaheb Ambedkar. Now the league had to strive hard for the realization of the objectives laid down in the aims and objectives of the league.*

The social equality league was founded to create the spirit and outlook of equality among the Hindus in general and among the untouchable communities in particular. On

* Bhimrao Ramaji Ambedkar by Kairmode (Marathi) Vol.2, P.127

behalf of the league the wearing of the sacred thread and holding of community dinners were encouraged. In the beginning the dinners were arranged in the houses of league's office bearers alternately. Even here also some members faced the threat of social boycott from their sub-caste men. Shri Shrivtarkar the general secretary of Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha was threatened with boycott by his caste men of chamar community when he had arranged the dinner for the members of the social equality league in his house.

Appeal letter issued by Babasaheb on behalf of the league.

"The league was founded on 4th Sept. 1927 and it had earned a good name in a shortest possible time. This shows that the programme undertaken by the league is absolutely essential to make the Hindu society healthy and strong. Had there been any weapon like news papers with the league some people who are now somewhat critical would have been favorably inclined towards the league and the league would have speedily forged ahead in promoting its aims and objectives. The opponents of league had such weapon in their hands and with that they were attacking the league from all the corners. In order to arrest this attack on league the league must have the news paper of its own. Feeling the need of this urgency the league had decided to start a fortnightly news paper called "Samata" (Equality). But for this we will need money and considering the number of members of the league it will be difficult to raise the necessary funds from them. For this we need some "Reserve Fund" and hence we are earnestly requesting the members and well wishers of the league that each member should at least pay Rs.50 towards the fund if not in one installment at least in some installments. The league in any way is not opposed to Hinduism in principle. In view of the league Hinduism has become almost life less. It is our firm opinion that if there is any organization which can infuse life and vigor in Hinduism it is the league.

Thus it is our earnest request that everybody by extending

his helping hand to activities of the league should help making the Hindu society and Hinduism strong and healthy."

Babasaheb had decided to undertake the programme of inter-dinning among the various caste men particularly among the people of sub-caste -untouchables. He had also decided to promote inter-caste marriages among various sub-caste men and the sub-caste communities of the untouchables. In addition to the programme of inter-dinning and inter-caste marriages the other programmes of the league were the wearing of sacred thread by the untouchables. (Wearing of the sacred thread was the solely the religious right of the upper caste men). The thread wearing ceremony was performed for the wearer who was normally an untouchable by shri Palyeshastri and shri Mama Varerkar both were the Vedic scholars and were Brahmins. Mama was the editor of a weekly called "the world," and he used to give publicity to these programmes. Another programme of the league was the owning of news paper. The league started a news paper under the title "Equality." Shri D.V.Naik was its editor. The paper was started in 1928 and it was a weekly.

The league used to perform marriages of the untouchable couples using the Vedic mantras (Lore) and not the puranic mantras. According to the Brahmanical tradition the marriages of the Sudras were performed using the puranic system of the marriage because the practice of Vedic religion was not allowed to the Sudras and Ati-Sudras. The Chhatrapati Shahu of Kolhapur by challenging the Brahmanical practices asked the people to perform their marriages using Vedic mode of performing marriages irrespective of their caste. Following the foot-steps of Chhatrapati Shahu the league took up the programme of performing the marriages of untouchable couples using Vedic Mantras and Vedic mode of ceremony. Some reform minded Brahmin priests versed in the Vedic Mantras and Vedic ceremony used to help them in performing the marriages.

Shridharpant, the son of Lokmanya Tilak was a great

social reformer and a close friend of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. He wanted to open the office of the league in his own house at Poona. However Babasaheb did not allow him to do that thinking that some orthodox men in Poona may trouble him. On one occasion during the Ganapati festival Babasaheb also agitated along with his followers to secure the right to worship Ganapati by offering flowers and other worshipping material to the image of Ganapati in Dadar-Bombay. The police had to interfere in it. But inspite of all his efforts the caste Hindu organizers of the Ganapati festival did not accept the claim of untouchables of worshipping the Ganapati by going near to the image.

Dr. Ambedkar's efforts to promote the programme of inter-caste-dinning and inter-caste marriages did not continue with that seriousness as he had intended due to his serious involvement in the episode at Mahad, in the work of Bombay legislative assembly, in the work of Simon commission and the temple Satyagraha at Nasik and also in the work of Round Table conferences. However his persuasion of anti-caste programme through the social equality programme of the league remained a dominant note in his life activity and thought. Without equality the enjoyment of human rights is not possible and without the conducive social atmosphere enabling man to freely exercise his rights man's progress is not possible. Hindu caste system was the negation of all virtues and hence he stood for its total annihilation throughout his life.

According to the provision of the Montagu-Chelmsford reform of 1919 the only one seat was granted to represent the untouchable communities on the newly formed legislative council of the Bombay Assembly. Up to the year 1927 there was only one nominated member of the untouchables to represent the problems of the untouchables in Bombay legislative Assembly. In 1926 one more member to represent the interest of the untouchables was added to the council and Dr, Ambedkar was nominated to the council. He was sworn as a member on 18th February 1927. Dr. Solanki was another

member who represented the untouchables along with Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar made his first speech on budget on 24th February 1927 in the council. Some of his views on the budget are as follows:

The revenue system should be reliable, he said, it means it ought to be certain in its yield. The land revenue which is the largest is capable of variation of something like 50 lakhs and excise the second largest source has shown a variation of 73 lakhs. If this variation continues in this manner then the ditch for the government will be more than one crore.

Then he said that from the stand point of tax payers also this revenue system is inequitable and indefensible. Every farmer whatever may be his income is brought under the levy of the land tax. But under the income tax no person is called upon to pay the tax if he has not earned any income during the year. This is not so in case of farmer. Whether there is a failure of crop or abundance of crop the poor agriculturist is called upon to pay the revenue. The income tax is levied on the recognized principle of ability to pay. But under the land revenue system, a person is taxed at the same rate whether he is the owner of one acre of land or a Jahagirdar or an Inamdar. He has to pay the tax at the same rate. It is a proportionate tax and not a progressive tax as it ought to be. Again under the income tax holder of income below a certain minimum are exempted from levy. But under the land revenue the tax is remorselessly collected from every one, whether he rich or poor.

He proceeds further in his speech that "excise is an item from which large revenue is derived. If we take the figure in money that people spend on drinking in Bombay presidency the Bombay presidency stands first in spending the money that people do in drinking the liquor. This tax was imposed because this will in a way check the people's habit of drinking liquor. Excise tax is public legal money. The government has accepted the policy of prohibition and has adopted certain measures. The government, I understand, has appointed a

committee to work out the measures for prohibition but I understand that the 40 percent of the committee members are themselves opposed to the prohibition. Mr. President while I am speaking about the financial system of this country, I think that it is fair to suggest that the prosperity of the people is the greatest patrimony of the state. The state (Finance Minister) should not demoralize them or beggar them. A state that beggars its people ends in beggaring itself."

Dr. Ambedkar proceeded further and said that "coming to the other sources of revenue, he said that, here also he doubted whether the finance member was doing well. For instance, taking the forest as a source of revenue, in 1921-22 the forest revenue was Rs.74.9 lakhs; in 1927-28 the forest revenue was only Rs.74 lakhs. But if you take the expenditure that has been incurred on the forests, you will see that the expenditure has increased from Rs.40 lakhs to Rs. 48 lakhs; it is a loss of something like 4 lakhs."

He then turned to the expenditure side of the budget and said that "most members of this house are alarmed at the deficit. I am not. What has disquieted me is that the deficit is not due to any policy of social advancement. The deficit is due to entirely to the increase in cost on the non-productive charges of the administration."

Again Dr. Ambedkar participated in the debate on budget next year and gave expression to his thought on 21st February 1928. He proceeded that the budget is no doubt unsatisfactory not because it is a deficit budget.

We are now coming to a close of the first decade of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. These reforms were introduced in the year 1921 in order that the transferred subjects may receive greater consideration at the hands of the government than the subjects which are called "Reserve". If we analyze the expenditure of this presidency from the year 1921 up to now we find that the hopes that we entertained that under the new regime objects of expenditure which help progress will receive preference over subjects which merely

help the maintenance of law and order, have failed to come true. He then gave the statistical account of money spent on transferred departments and the reserved departments during 1925-26. In the entire provinces province wise the statistics shows that it is only in Bombay presidency that the government had spent more money on reserved departments than the transferred departments. From the figures it is evident, he added, that the reserved departments are systematically overfed and the transferred departments are systematically starved. Sir, he added, what good is an Indian finance member (minister) if he is not to respond to the wishes of his countrymen. He went further and said that the financial position of this presidency is indeed very serious. In 1922-23 there was a surplus of Rs.64 lakhs. In 1923-24 the surplus came down to Rs.29.38 lakhs. In the year 1925-26 the year was closed with a deficit of Rs.91 lakhs.

Sir, you know, he said, that "the loan arrangement will have soon been paid off. Some arrangements shall have to be made for the repayment of the loan that is bound to cost a heavy burden on the already exhausted finances of the presidency. Sir, this council and the government have committed to universal compulsory primary education. This council and the government are also committed to the carrying out of the policy of prohibition. These three items are going to make a very heavy call upon the finances of this presidency, And when our finances are deteriorating year by year even without these three items, I can not quite imagine what will be the state of affairs when we begin to give these items a practical shape." In the end Dr. Ambedkar suggested that "sir, the situation is indeed very serious and it is high time the Hon. Finance Member make up his mind to deal with it in a statesman like manner."

Again on 12th March, 1927 Dr. Ambedkar spoke on the financial provision for education department. He presented certain points in his speech for the consideration of Hon. Education Minister. His first point was that the Bombay presidency is making a very very slow progress in the matter

of education. If we take the statistics, he said, from 1916-17 to 1922-23 we find that the expenditure on education has increased by something like 100 percent, while the increase in the number of pupils during the same period is only 29 percent. Sir, I know, he said that, there is a great financial stringency in this presidency. Under the circumstances we certainly plead for one thing. We have in this presidency two departments which are working at cross purposes. We have the Department of education, the purpose of which is to moralize and socialize the people. We have on the other hand the department of excise which is working in the reverse direction. I plead that we should at least spend on education the same amount that we take from the people in the form of excise revenue. The amount of expenditure that we incur per individual in this presidency on education is only 14 annas the amount of money that we recover in the form of excise revenue is 2-2-9(Rs.2.17) I think it will be fair if we spend on education at least that what we take from the people in the form of excise.

Another point which I would like to bring to the notice of Hon. Minister for education is that the amount of money that we are spending on primary education is to a large extent really wasted. The object of primary education is to see that every child that enters the portals of primary school does not leave it until not only it becomes literate but continues to be literate throughout its rest of life. When we take the statistics we see only 18 out of 100 reach this stage and 82 out of 100 relapse into the state of illiteracy.

I therefore request the Hon. Education minister to spend more money on primary education otherwise what we have spent will be an utter loss.

Sir, my third point is on the manner in which we finance education in the presidency. Out of the total expenditure which we incur on Arts colleges, something like 36 percent is financed from fees; on high schools, something like 31 percent is financed from fees; on middle schools something

like 26 percent is derived from fees. Sir, I submit that this is something like commercialization of education. The education Department is not a department which can be treated on the basis quid pro quo. Education ought to be cheapened in all possible ways and to the greatest possible extent. I urge this plea because I feel that we are arriving at a stage when the lower orders of society are just getting into the high schools, middle schools and colleges and the policy of this department therefore ought to make higher education as cheap to the lower classes as it can possibly be made.

Sir, my forth point is about the great disparity in the comparative advancement in education of the different classes in this presidency. The census report of this presidency has for the purpose of comparing the advancement of the different communities in the matter of education divided the total population into four different classes. The first is called "advanced Hindus", the second is called "intermediate Hindus - non Brahmins."

There is a third class called the backward classes which includes the depressed classes, Hill Tribes and the criminal Tribes. Then we have the fourth class which covers the Mohamedans. What we notice is that one can see the great disparity in the comparative advancement of these different communities in the matter of education.

The Non-Brahmins here who are first in the strength of population are third in matter of educational advancement. Backward classes who are second in the strength of population are fourth in education. The Mohamedans who are third in population are second in the progress of education. The advanced Hindus who are fourth in population are first in the advancement of education.

Dr. Ambedkar argued further that this country is composed of different communities. All these communities are unequal in their status and progress. If they are to be brought to the level of equality then the only remedy is to adopt the principle of equality and to give favoured

treatment to those who are below the level. There are some, I know, who adhere to the principle of equality of treatment. But I say that the government has done well in applying this principle to the Mohamedans. For I honestly believe that equality of treatment to the people who are unequal is simply another name for indifferentism and neglect. My only complaint is that government has not yet thought fit to apply this principle to the backward classes. Economically speaking or socially speaking backward classes are handicapped in a manner in which no other community is handicapped. I, therefore think that the principle of favoured treatment must be adopted in their case. Their position is worse than that of the Mohamedans. If there is any people who need more favoured treatment it is the backward classes who deserve more attention of the government than do the Mohamedans. I urge upon the Hon. Education Minister for education that he should adopt the same method and principle towards the uplift of the backward classes as have been adopted towards the uplift of the Mohamedan community.

Sir, on the Report of the educational commission of 1882 what the government of India suggested to improve the educational condition of the Mohamedan community was the appointed of a special inspecting staff to look after the educational wants of the Mohamedan community. I think there is an equal urgency for special inspecting staff to look after the education of the depressed classes.

Sir, primary education Act is a great wrong. It is wrong because the responsibility of education has been transferred to the Local Boards by this council. The council has transferred the education to those who do not feel for education. Sir, the education of the masses is a matter of great cost and if there is anybody who can bear it, it is this council with its revenue of 15 ½ crores and not the local bodies with their meager revenue of a few lakhs. I feel, said Ambedkar that this council in transferring education to the local bodies has practically postponed the spread of

education among the masses since die and in doing so has gravely erred. But sir, this is only the preliminary to the point which I wish to make, namely that the people who are the greatest sufferers by this wrong are the depressed classes. Sir, there is only one representative of the depressed classes provided in each local body. For certainty, one man cannot count in a body of ten or twelve. I hear that under the present regime, the depressed classes find themselves in a most helpless condition. They are surrounded by those who are not interested in their betterment. Therefore, the government should appoint a certain inspecting agency to look after specially the educational advancement of the depressed classes in this presidency. In the end he suggested some reform in the mode of giving scholarship to the depressed class students and he also suggested that instead of making provision for budget under the title backward classes the budget for depressed classes students should be separately, made.

The Bombay University for a Long Time had remained more or less a body to conduct the examination and after examining announce the result. Then after the change of time the role of the university is also needed to change. This changed outlook intended to make the university a better teaching university. Hence to make the university not only a teaching university but a better teaching university a bill was introduced in the Bombay legislative council and the bill came for discussion in the council on. 27th July, 1927 in which Dr. Ambedkar participated very effectively. In his opening remarks he stated that:

Sir, one of the greatest defects from which this university ever since it was established suffers was that it was primarily constituted as an examining body. Knowing well this defect the university commission of 1902 recommended that the statute which brought the university into being must be altered so as to enable the university directly to undertake teaching besides its work of examining. But when the university actually tried to do that some existing colleges

opposed it and the only thing, therefore, the university could do was the appropriate the post-graduate education. Since 1912 the University of Bombay has been following that line. Sir, he stated that, this separation of post-graduate education from under-graduate education has been brought about by the Act of 1904. University appropriated the post-graduate education for itself leaving the under-graduate education to the colleges. This has produced a kind of rivalry between post-graduate teachers and the under-graduate teachers. Now sir, he opined that when the college teachers and the university (post-graduate) teachers are not on amicable terms, I think no research; no promotion of knowledge can be carried on with any benefit either to the university, or to the public at large.

His second point was he says that the colleges which are by and large are manned by private individuals are usually understaffed and the teachers therein are required to engage almost 13 hours per week. Since there is no coordination between the collegiate teaching and the university (post-graduate) teaching the maintenance of standard is a problem of some grave magnitude. Hence the teaching in college has become a mechanical process. It can be called as notebook based teaching. After this said Ambedkar that if your under-graduate work is as bad as I have stated to be, a university which merely super-imposes post-graduate teaching to work upon it cannot succeed in promoting real knowledge or real research.

Dr. Ambedkar asserted further that if the object of the bill is to promote higher education and research, the best method would be not to separate the colleges from the university as has been done now but to make a synthesis in which the university and the colleges would be partners on terms of equality and would be participating in promoting together, both the under-graduate and the post-graduate studies.

He then criticized the policy of the Bombay University as it has no representation of the backward classes on the senate of the University. He ended his speech by issuing a note of

warning that "I want to say most emphatically that unless the representation to the backward communities is provided for on the senate, the bill would be of no value to us whatsoever and I for one who will vote against it."

Again while participating the discussion on "the Bombay University Act Amendment Bill No. 4" on 5th October, 1927 he said that "some of us (Munshi) seem to hold that the university is merely a body for the purpose of making statutes and regulations, that it is a body which is merely concerned with holding examinations and with providing post-graduate courses in University Departments of education to be started under this Bill, I think that that is a very narrow view of the university. One of the fundamental functions of the university, as I understand it, is to provide facilities for bringing the higher education to the doors of the needy and poor. I do not think that any university in any civilized country can justify its existence if it merely deals with the problems of examinations and the granting of degrees. Now, if it is the duty of a modern university to provide facilities for the higher education to the backward communities, I think it will be accepted as a corollary that the backward communities should have some control in the university affairs. Dr. Ambedkar proceeded further and said that sir, it is said that the university is primarily a concern of the intelligentsia and of educated classes, and that as the university is to function properly it is necessary that it should be controlled by what are called the educated classes. I would accept that principle, if the educated classes who are going to control the university possessed what we called social virtues. If they, for instance, sympathized with the aspirations of the lower classes, if they, recognized that the lower classes had rights, if they recognized that those rights must be respected, then probably we, coming from the backward communities might well entrust our destinies to what are called the advanced communities. But sir for centuries we have had the bitterest experience of the rule of what are called the higher and the advanced classes. Sir, I think it is hardly

to the credit of the advanced classes that there should exist in their country a large part of the population which is known as the criminal tribes. It is certainly not to their credit that there should exist in this country a population which is regarded untouchables.

Surely, they could have raised the status of the depressed classes. They could have raised the status of the criminal classes. They could have brought their culture to us and made us equal to them. If they had only the desire to do so. But they have never done so in the past and do not mean to do anything in that direction in future. By their callous neglect of us and by their active hostility to our progress they have convinced us that they are really our enemies. There is no doubt that it is their desire to keep us where we are."

Dr. Ambedkar while referring to the opposition of the members of the opposition bench to the bill under discussion which aimed at giving representation to the backward classes on the senate of the university said that "I do not wish to refer to the debate that has gone on for the last few days. But there is not the slightest doubt about the fact that the opposition benches* which looked upon government as their enemy sided with it now with the sole object of defeating us on this vital question. There is no other excuse for their conduct except that they wanted to defeat the claims of the backward communities for representation through nomination. It is for that reason that they have joined the government whom they opposed in season and out of season. Sir Can we have any trust in an intelligentsia so narrow so illiberal in its views."

Then on the point of no economic gain in the senate membership Dr. Ambedkar said the following:

"My honorable friend Mr. Munshi said that if it had been a question of division any material benefits he would probably consent to the introduction of communal representation on the senate. But I wish to remind him that

* The members of the opposition bench in the council were mostly the congress men who had won certain seats in the council election.

the backward classes have come to realize that after all the education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forgo material benefits. We may forgo the material benefits of civilization, but we cannot forgo our right and opportunity to reap the benefit of the highest education to the fullest extent. That is the importance of this question. From the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe. It is for this reason that the fight for increase of seats is being made."

boundary of every village in India. The people called untouchables were not allowed to stay within the precinct of the village. Caste Hindus considered their touch and nearness as inauspicious and irreligious. Prominent among the untouchables were Mahars, Chambhars, Mangs and Dhors. Except the Mahars the rest are leather workers. These are the major sub-castes among the untouchables though there are some minor sub-castes also in addition to these. But among these the Mahars who are in majority among the untouchables and are wide spread in Bombay presidency and also its adjacent area of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra, Karnataka and Goa. They are the people who are solely dependent on their respective villages. They had no profession like the profession of other untouchable caste except serving the high caste Hindus in carrying the message of the dead to the relatives staying in other villages, sweeping the village lanes to keep it clean, making announcement of the important meeting or decisions of the village Panchayat to the people by going around the lanes of the village, doing manual work on the occasion of marriage in any family of the villager, carrying the dead animal of the villager and disposing it off. In addition to these village works of filthy nature they were also required to do the government work under the orders of village headman called Patil and the village accountant called Kulkarni. Any order of these two prominent men of village was law. The Mahars were to carry their message to the people of the village and even to the people of other

villages whenever ordered by these two village officers. The Mahars should assist them in the matter of revenue collection of the government. The Mahars should also attend the work of government officers if they came to visit the villages. The officers used to use horse for their travelling and the Mahar had to run after the horse with the luggage and record of the officer. The Mahars had to attend the government officer for 24 hours as long as he is in the village.

In lieu of these services the Mahar had some pieces of rent free land and he used to collect some food grains from the Rayats (farmers) once in a year during harvest time. All this system to which the Mahar was permanently attached without any escape from it generations together is called as his Vatan and he is sentimentally attached to it calling himself as Vatandar (vatan-fief holder) without understanding the kind of perpetual slavery attached to it and there was no way out to escape from it. Only person who knew the inhumanity attached to this slavery of Mahars was the princely ruler of Kolhapur State shri. Chhatrapati Shahu who abolished it by law and freed the Mahars from the bondage of their Vatan and made them touchable at least in law which was the beginning of their freedom from their age old bondage. Chhatrapati did it in 1919 and openly said about it in the depressed classes conference held at Managaon in March 1920 under the chairmanship of a young budding star from the untouchables Dr.B.R.Ambedkar.

Perhaps it is from these days Dr. Ambedkar was very seriously thinking about how to end the Vatan system of the untouchables, particularly the Mahars. He was propagating against it through the meetings of the untouchables organized under the auspices of Bahishkrit Hitakarini 20 Sabha in Bombay presidency and elsewhere. He was now trying to find out whether anything can be done to work out in the government to introduce some changes favourable to the vatan holding untouchables either to end or mend the system. Dr. Ambedkar became the nominated member of the Bombay legislative council on 18th February, 1927 and within a year

he worked out on the reform of the vatan work that the untouchables did throughout the year under vatan system. He introduced a Bill called "Amendment Bill on the Hereditary offices Act 1874."

The gist of the Bill introduced by Dr. Ambedkar is as follows:

The hereditary offices act did not cover the Patel (Patil) or the Kulkarni. This hereditary act covered only the inferior hereditary officers. Under such inferior hereditary officers cover the Mahars in the Deccan, the Vethias or Varthanias in Gujarat, the Ramoshis or the Juglias and Holias in Karnatak. A large part of these inferior Vatan holders are Mahars, and in the course of the remarks that I propose to offer to this House, I shall largely speak of the mahars as representatives of the inferior officers.

Sir in order to understand the provisions of this bill the house must know the wrongs and the grievances which have led me to bring forth this Bill.

Sir these inferior holders of Vatan are government servants according to the government Act. But the duties of these government servants are defined nowhere. They can be called to render their services in any department and they dare not refuse to do the work wherever they are called for. The duties, the departments and the working hours of the government servants are all fixed. Thus the government servant can work only in that department to which he belongs. But Mahar is the maid servant of all work. Moreover there is no time limit to his work. Mahar is the servant everywhere and the servant with no time limit to work.

Another factor in case of the work of Mahar is that if the time demands and there is the need of more members he has to bring all his family members including even women and children into the field of work irrespective of time and duration. If the officiator is absent his wife may be called upon, if the wife is absent his mother may be called upon, if the mother is absent the young female members of the family

are required to render services in the absence of the officiator. Imagine for one moment a situation like this, a young female Mahar of 18 years called upon by a police officer of 18 years to carry his Bigar with him for a distance of five or six miles; imagine the dangers to which she is exposed under a situation like this. Sir, there is no escape out of the system as it exists today. I submit that this is the most oppressive system not obtainable in any other department of government service.

Coming to the remuneration aspect what is the remuneration that these poor people get for their hard and arduous labor that they do for all the 24 hours? The Hon. Members will be surprised to know that the government practically pays nothing from their treasury directly for the services it extracts from these people. Their remuneration runs only in annas per month.

The sources of income for these people, the Vatandar Mahars, are two. The first source is the Inam land and the second source is what is called the Baluta or the collection of the grain made by the vatandar Mahars from the villagers. These Inam lands were not given by British Government but they were given to these Mahars by the ancient emperors of this country. The prices have increased and the government has raised the salaries of its employees many times. But the British Government has never paid a moment's attention to the remuneration of these people. They have left these poor people with their lands which the ancient Rajas have given to them. The Mahar population has increased enormously and the land assigned to them is divided and sub-divided to such an extent that it yields very little to support the family.

The main part of the remuneration which these people get comes largely from the second source, namely, the Baluta. The Mahars are government servants. The government takes the responsibility of paying all its employees but the Mahar has been left out with the Baluta that he collects from the Rayats. Again how much Rayat has to pay is no where decided or fixed. The amount or the quality of the Baluta is left with the sweet will of the Rayat.

I submit sir, that this is an atrocious system, a system where there is no justice in it. If the government desires that their work is necessary then it should pay the Mahars from the government's treasury for their work. The government should not throw the responsibility upon the Rayats.

Another thing is, he stated that the continuation of the service of the Mahar depends upon the report of village officers like Patil and Kulkarni to the higher officers like Mamledar or Divisional Commissioner who always up-hold the report of the village level officers. If the action is taken against any Mahar the whole group of Mahars in village suffers and the action is rarely reversed without punishing severely. The Rayats declare social boycott and stop paying Baluta. Ambedkar cited an example of a village where caste Hindus declared social boycott against the Mahars only because a Mahar put tiles on the roof of his house. Sir, such a system which mars the spirit of all progress can be supported by no right thinking man.

Sir, the Bill I propose to place before this house makes two divisions of the Vatan holding Mahars. The first division is of those who are absolutely tired of remaining in the system and would like to be relieved of it. Sir, such people should be relieved of their Vatan obligation permitting them to retain vatan land if they pay full rate of assessment on their land. Recently the village Joshis were relieved of their work but were allowed to retain their land when they paid the full revenue assessment. The Mahars who want to get relieved from their vatan work should be allowed to retain their land provide that they pay the full revenue assessment.

Another point he stated was that the Baluta of the Mahar from the Rayats as well as from the government should be converted into money cess and the government should collect the share of the Mahars from the Rayats along with the land revenue that the government collects from the Rayats.

Then sir, stated Ambedkar that his third provision was the partition of the Baluta between two specific shares, one

for private service and other for government service. According to the view of the government Baluta is a joint payment for services to the Rayat as well as to the government. In the paper of 1919 the government expressly stated that the Baluta is not paid merely for the private service but is also paid for the government service. Now sir, there are some Mahars who are willing to render their services to the government but not to the Rayats. Similarly there are also some Rayats who are willing to relieve the unwilling Mahars from their services to Rayats. But under the existing law this freedom is denied to the Mahars. They are forced to serve whether they wish it or not. This is only due to the fact that the Baluta is a joint remuneration and there is no way to distinguish how much is the share of the Rayat and how much is the share of the government. In these days of rivalry in social advancement he stated that, the tension between the Rayats and the Mahars have become great and will continue to grow in intensity unless freedom to employ and freedom to serve is provided for. To achieve this purpose it is necessary to define the quota of the government and the quota of the Rayats in the Baluta paid to the Mahars. If the Mahars render their services only to the government the Rayats then can refuse to give Baluta to the Mahars. Therefore in the interest of the village administration, peace in village and the better government administration in villages the partition of the Baluta should take place. More over in this system it should be something like a contract. If some Rayats do not want the services of Mahars they should be free to get rid of it. We know that some days back some village barbers had filed a suit against the Rayats for not utilizing their services of cutting the hair. Their contention was that the Rayats should utilize their service however inefficient they may be. There should be a provision that if any Rayat does not want the services of Mahars he should be free himself from their compulsory services. What my bill aims at is "the freedom of contract." But under the present system this freedom of contract for both the parties is negative. I think when every society advances from status to contract we should not block the progress of

Indian society by refusing the Mahars and the Rayats the liberty of contract.

Sir, said Ambedkar that this bill which I have introduced is not altogether mine. There was a similar feud between the Mahars and the Rayats in Berar (Madhya Pradesh). The government there appointed a committee in 1920. The committee there made the proposals and the government there introduced the provisions of the bill and I have reproduced those provisions practically in my bill. I submit sir, that the bill which I have introduced is good for the Berar why should it not be good for the Bombay presidency? Because the Berar Baluta system of the Mahars is the exact replica of the Bombay system.

In his conclusion Dr. Ambedkar stated that he has not tried to throw any additional burden on the Rayats in the interests of the Mahars. The reason is he said that he is the enemy of the vatan system. He has striven all along to destroy the Mahar vatan system although by this the Mahars will be the immediate sufferers. But he is convinced said he that the shackles of the vatan system are the principle causes which are keeping the Mahars backward. The scheme I have proposed said he that it is not going to impose any additional burden on the Rayats. Sir, before I end my remarks I would like to tell the house that this bill which I have introduced has the support of all the Mahars in the presidency. The Mahars were given the tax free lands in lieu of the services they rendered to the government and this land was inalienable. In my bill it is stated that any alienation of such vatan land which is assigned as remuneration by the government to the Mahar is inalienable and it should always remain in the possession of the officiating Mahar.

Thus the vatan system under which the Mahars remained as slaves of both the high caste Hindus as well as of the government are doing all sorts of filthy and manual laboring work without any way of escaping from it was the practice which agonized Dr. Ambedkar right from his early days. His

thought and action right from his student days in America shows that he was developing himself as a man of egalitarian and humanitarian outlook. The treatment that he had received right from his primary school days of Satara to his driving out from Baroda service ignobly and cruelly where he had joined the service of Baroda state after receiving M.A. and PhD. degrees from the Columbia University in America was also the bitterest possible experience which troubled him and whenever he remembered it, it was not so without tears in his eyes. Hence the system of untouchability that has enslaved so called untouchables and the caste system that has made Hindus stagnant in their social thinking was the bone of contention for him throughout his whole life. Hence whatever social practice that strengthened these two practices were the subject of his attack and agitation. He therefore was opposing the continuation of the vatan system of the Mahars. Therefore, he had begun his move in the Bombay legislative council right from his entry there in the council to do away with the system by law.

Before introducing the hereditary offices Act Amendment Bill he wrote three articles in Bahishkrit Bharat under the title "Mahar Vatan" in the issues of 11, 12 and 13. The convincing arguments that he made in his articles about the evil effect of the Vatan system over the Mahars made tremendous impact on Mahars all over the Bombay presidency and even the adjoining part of the Bombay presidency. Though in the beginning some opposing voices were heard from some quarters from the Mahars but the opposition disappeared soon as a result of the support that the Mahars gave to the bill by organizing public meetings all over the Bombay presidency. Dr. Ambedkar himself addressed many such meetings organized at various places and convinced the people through his speeches that how the Mahar Vatan has been the cause of their slavery and socio-religious and economic degradation. Dr. Ambedkar's Bill in the legislative council provided a big platform for carrying on the propaganda against untouchables slavery that they suffered

due to the unalterable age-old system of the Mahar Vatan.

A Bill on Small Land Holders Relief was introduced in Bombay legislative council on 10th October 1927 in which also Dr. Ambedkar participated. He stated in the beginning that the Bill proposes to solve two problems which affect the agriculturists of the Bombay presidency. One is the problem of scattered farms and other is the problem of small farms. He stated that "I agree that so far as scattered farms are concerned there should be consolidation. Considering the consolidation of small farms here I differ from the Hon. Mover of the bill. There may be difficulties in the existence of small farms but I do not admit that small farms are necessarily unprofitable or uneconomic. In my opinion whether the farm is economic or uneconomic does not necessarily depend upon the size of the farm. It depends upon the other factors of production. Whether a particular farm is economic or uneconomic is dependent not upon the size of the farm but upon whether it is commensurate with the capital which the farmer possesses. I do not, therefore, understand what is the use of enlarging the farms if the farmer has not got the wherewithal to cultivate the land. I do not understand how the increasing of the area of the soil will add anything to any produce if he has not got the necessary labour and capital to cultivate the land.

Moreover, said Ambedkar that ours is an agricultural country since the hoary past hence our soil is exhausted. No matter what efforts we may make we cannot raise the productivity of our soil to the same level as for instance in America where the soil is virgin. Hence the salvation lies not on increasing the size of the farms but on applying intensive cultivation that is employing More capital and more labour on the farms such as we have.

The remedies suggested in this bill are two first control of partition of the immovable property and second the sale of consolidated holdings. If these two methods are employed, in my opinion, a large part of our agricultural population will

be landless and I do not think that there is any dispute on the point that if these two methods are adopted a large part of our agricultural population will be landless and the poorer classes will be further pauperized.

In the end Dr. Ambedkar suggested co-operative agriculture for farmers where even the small farmer can also join without losing his ownership of land.

Then the Bill went to the subject committee where it was discussed and approved. Dr. Ambedkar signed the approved committee report with his own note of dissent on 10th July, 1928. The summary of his dissent note is as follows:

1) The bill assumes that for profitable cultivation we should have bigger farms than what we have now. I am not satisfied with it. Here the question is "does the bill solves the problem of creating large farms out of the existing small farms in such a manner that no serious objection can be raised to it?"

2) Firstly it penalizes the owner of the small farmers by making the small farm the burden rather than the benefit. Secondly it prohibits the farmers to produce small farms in future. It refers to the restriction on partition of the land. The bill introduces the problem to the right of ownership of the people.

3) I object to this mechanism on three grounds. Firstly it affects the right of property. If the arrangement was state ownership and the state management of lands the invasion of rights of property would not be a matter of such anxious concern. But the arrangement is such that there will be the aggrandizement of some land lords at the cost of the rest. The effect of this mechanism will be that it will reduce some farmers into landless labourers.

4) The second ground of my objection to the mechanism of the bill is that both the small farmers and the neighbouring big farmer must be simultaneously be ready to sell the land and purchase the land. The fragmented pieces of land have

basically come into existence due to the division of joint family and such small pieces of lands are generally ancestral lands and the owners are not generally ready to part with the ancestral lands unless they are seriously constrained by the economic condition. So the consolidation process will be absolutely slow and it will not yield the expected result. The existing small farms will continue indefinitely in spite of the desire to bring about the combination of small farms of an early date.

5) I am certain, he stated that, the establishment of co-operative farms of standard size will give us all that we want under the Bill and will save from the destruction of small farm owners. The co-operative farm will be like a share holders company in which the company remains even though the share holders change. In his view his scheme was simple in its operation and avoids the evils of the present bill.

6) He stated further that as a matter of fact such a scheme is working in many European countries. In fact the bill itself suggests my arguments in some part. A reference to clause 19 of the original bill which corresponds to clause 21 of the bill as amended by the select committee will show that no new fragment shall be cultivated unless it is combined with another contiguous farm. This I submit is nothing but the co-operative farming scheme which I have submitted above.

7) I may however say, he concluded that, under my scheme separate provision for consolidation would be unnecessary. A co-operative farm would be both a large and a consolidated holding.

This shows that right from the beginning of his career as a parliamentarian, beginning from February 1927 he showed his originality, deep understanding of the people's problems and his urge to aid the government which in his view was the important agency to promote the culture of the people.

There was a discussion in the council in March on the prohibition and it was stated from the government side that

the prohibition was the accepted policy of the government. In course of discussion the minister for excise gave statistics of consumer of liquor in Bombay presidency and stated that the people of Bombay presidency are not drinking as much the people of other provinces in India. But sir said Ambedkar that the Hon. Minister will admit while people are drinking less of licit liquor; the manufacture of illicit liquor in this presidency has been on the increase. This means that if the drinking of licit liquor is decreasing the figure of manufacture of illicit liquor shows that the drinking of illicit liquor is increasing. The result that we get is that the consumption is not less. The Hon. Minister himself has stated that the illicit liquor has increased in use. On the whole, Said Ambedkar that, we are not gainers, because the only result is that people are drinking less of licit liquor and more of illicit liquor. The question then that arises is why is the manufacture of illicit liquor increasing in this presidency? Though there is no official reply but in my opinion, said Ambedkar, the increase in the manufacture of illicit liquor in this presidency is entirely due to the high tariff on country liquor. The people always replace the commodity which is high in prices with the commodity that is low in prices. We know that when there is a price rise of sugar the people substitute it with gur (gul). When the price of coffee rises the people will substitute it with tea. Similarly the increase of illicit drink in this presidency is entirely due to the high tariff on country liquor. If my Hon. Friend the minister of excise is really the believer in prohibition he must regulate the tariff otherwise he may succeed in controlling the consumption of licit liquor, he will give direct incentive to the increase in illicit liquor.

I was glad to hear, said Ambedkar that prohibition is now the accepted policy of the government. About the bringing about the method of prohibition the Hon. minister has discussed about the method of rationing and the method of local option. In his opinion both these methods are more or less equally efficient and their effect more or less will be the same.

The problem of prohibition entirely depends upon the financial solution of the question. This may cause financial losses and the question is how we are going to make the financial losses that we may incur as a result of our new excise policy. We have no idea about the kind and method of taxation that the Hon. Minister has in contemplation. Sir we on this side feel that we are not opposed to the additional taxation provided the government will use the taxes for nation building purposes. We are certainly opposed to additional taxation if Government is going to use the taxes merely to maintain the Government merely to govern. But if they are going to make life happy and not merely try to make life possible then, I think we on this side are certainly willing to support any tax.

Throughout his life Dr. Ambedkar exhibited his humanism the urge for and welfare of the women and their all round progress along with men. In Bombay legislative council a bill for maternity benefit was introduced in July 1928.

The Hon. the general member in speaking against the bill pointed out that this is not an accident as we understand it under the workmen's compensation Act, and therefore, the principle of the workmen's compensation Act cannot be extended to the women who would be entitled to get the benefit under this particular bill. Dr. Ambedkar argued out in support of the bill. He stated that this is not an accident. But it does not follow that women are not entitled to get the benefit of proposed bill. There is absolutely unanimity on this proposition that the pre-natal conditions which affect the mother are important factors in the bill and the subsequent bringing up of the child. I do not think anybody will controvert that proposition. And I believe, stated Ambedkar, therefore sir, that it is in the interests of the nation that the mother ought to get certain amount of rest during the pre-natal period and also subsequently and the principle of the bill is based on entirely on that principle. This being so sir, I am to admit that the burden of this ought to be largely borne

by the government. And in every country where the maternity benefit has been introduced the government has been subjected to a certain amount of charge with regard to maternity benefit.

By employing women the employer is bound to get more benefit than by employing men. I think said Ambedkar that, the bill is not altogether wrong if it seeks to impose the liability under the present circumstances on the employer; I therefore, support the bill on that account.

The benefit contemplated by this bill ought to be given by this legislative council to the poor women who toil in our factories in this presidency, said Ambedkar.

In addition to his speeches made in the legislative council on important bills Dr. Ambedkar often participated in asking questions on various issues of significance right from his entry into the council. He used to participate the deliberations very fearlessly. Within a week's time from his entry into the council he asked a question on not selecting Mr. M.K.Jadhav. He entered the council on 18 February, 1927 and the below mentioned questions on Mr. Jadhav were asked on 3rd March, 1927. Shri Jadhav was a B.A. Hons. Degree holder from Bombay University. He had applied for deputy collector's post. There were three vacancies. Shri Jadhav belonged to the depressed classes' category (Mahar). His selection was not made. The selection of two Maratha caste candidates and one Muslims candidate was made. On this issue Dr. Ambedkar asked the following questions and answers given by the government are very much funny.

The question that Dr. Ambedkar Asked was: will government be pleased to state-1. Whether Mr. M.K.Jadhac B.A. (Hons) Bombay, applied for one of the three posts of deputy collector recently filled up by the Revenue Department of the Government of Bombay? 2. Whether they were aware that he belonged to the depressed classes? The reason, why his application was rejected? For the first two questions the answer from the government was 'yes'. For the third question

the answer was: "Government regrets that they are not prepared to state the reasons why Mr. Jadhav was not selected".

The open secret was that the caste ridden high caste Hindus were opposed to the appointment of the untouchables, even if somebody was qualified, to the higher posts in the government and the English government which was alien never thought of hurting the caste feelings of the upper caste Hindus. Such cases are not wanting in modern Indian history during the British Rule in India.

For example the mass education as contemplated by the dispatch of 1854 was in practice available to all except the depressed classes. In the educational report of the Bombay presidency of 1855-56 it is stated that a Mahar boy in Dharwar asked for admission to Government School in Dharwad in July, 1856. He was prepared to pay the necessary fees. He was denied the admission by the government stating that the disadvantage under which the Mahar boy is put is not our creation.

Similarly in the beginning when the East India Company raised their army recruiting from the Indians it is mainly the low caste men including untouchables in all the three presidencies Calcutta, Madras and Bombay that entered the army of the company. The high caste men did not join the army considering the East India Company a company of beat eaters and sea voyagers who had come crossing the sea from their country. But after mutiny of 1857 the things changed. The high caste Hindus slowly changed their stand and their attitude towards the English government in India. The number of English educated men began growing. They began entering the government but their stand towards the low caste particularly the untouchables remained the same traditional one. The contemporary records indicate that the caste Hindus remained hostile as usual to any change towards untouchable's progress. They opposed and remained hostile to the entry of the untouchables in military and in

Government services. Whenever there was a serious agitation of the caste Hindus organizations against the British Indian Government the British Government in India punished them mercilessly but when the question of caste Hindus hostile attitude was concerned the British Government always stood with the caste Hindus against the untouchables.

This is the reason why Dr. Ambedkar told the English government in the round table conference of 1931 that the days that you should dictate and India should listen have gone. Now only the constitution framed by the Indians alone will be acceptable to the Indians.

In the princely state of Travancore, Kerala there is a place called Vykom where there is a famous temple of God Narayana. It is an irony that the untouchables were not only allowed to enter the temple but even the road leading to the temple was also forbidden for their use by the caste Hindus. There was a Satyagraha in 1924 to get the road thrown open for the use of the untouchables and many leading men of India including Mahatma Gandhi and Maharishi Vithal Ramaji Shinde participated in it. Maharishi Vithal Ramaji Shinde wrote the following about his observation.

“After observing the Satyagraha at Vykom the situation that I read was that in the Princely states of Travancore and Cochin in South Malabar no body including the caste Hindus, Christians, Muslims or any people of other religion are prevented to use the road leading to the temple of God Narayana. But the untouchables who regard themselves as Hindus are not allowed to use that road by the upper caste Hindus. The unity that upper caste Hindus had forged against the untouchables was very much surprising and this upper caste Hindus unity against the untouchables had full support of the princely states and the British Government was calculatedly ignoring the whole affair.” (My Reminiscences, P.357-Marathi). If any princely state was found turbulent against the British Government the government used to threaten it with dire consequences such as abolition of the state but here even if it is a matter of securing the human and

natural rights to the untouchables from the caste Hindus the British oft repeated answer to the grievances of the untouchables was that the untouchability and the caste system were not their creation.

Dr. Ambedkar had asked a number of questions in the Bombay legislative council on the educational help given to the pupils of the depressed classes, employment given to the people of depressed classes in the government services and the forest land given to the depressed classes for cultivation in Bombay presidency. The answers from the government on this questions were either evasive or it was stated that the information has been called for.

Mean while the Simon Commission was appointed by the English cabinet in England to review the working of Diarchy in India and to suggest the new reforms to be introduced in the government of India. The Simon Commission reached Bombay on February 3, 1928. The commission commenced the work of examining the working of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

To co-operate with the Simon Commission the central Government appointed a committee for all British India and every legislative council elected its provincial committee to work with the Simon Commission. On the Bombay provincial committee Dr. Ambedkar was selected along with other members by the Bombay legislative council on 3rd, August, 1928. The work done by Dr. Ambedkar there on the Simon Commission will be dealt with in the introduction to the 3rd part of the Bahashkrit Bharat translated into English. On 19th and 20th march 1927 Dr. Ambedkar launched an anti-caste and anti-untouchability movement at Mahad in Kolaba district which can be regarded as an epoch making event in the history of Indian nation. The awakening that was brought about by his tireless efforts through the public meetings and the programmes on behalf of the Bahashkrit Hitkarini Sabha from July 1924 to the beginning of the year 1927 among the untouchable communities in Bombay presidency had worked

like a magic wand. The untouchables had now started beginning to stand with him due to his depth of knowledge, courage of conviction, his firm belief in the ideal of man's equality to man and the spirit of fighting for bringing up those who are helpless and lived in ignorance and rugged poverty.

The untouchables of Vidarbha that were already struggling for their equality with the caste Hindus Dr. Ambedkar went there to Amaravati where the untouchables along with the non-Brahmins leaders like Panjabrao Deshmukh were agitating to establish their right to enter the temple of Goddess Ambadevi and worship the deity. Dr. Ambedkar presided over the meeting of the untouchables there in 1926.

After all this activity he was now very seriously thinking to launch a major mass movement of the untouchables which will be a permanent feature hereafter until the equality rights of untouchables are established in caste ridden Hindu society. The problem that he was contemplating was from where to start such a major movement. He thought of Pandharpur which in his opinion was once a big center of Buddhism and also a center of Saint-poets among whom many came from low castes and preached the idea of devotion to god and equality in worshipping the God and attaining liberation. But after some consideration he gave up the idea of selecting Pandharpur doubting that to what extent the hill (ghat) area near Pandharpur temple reserved for Brahmans will come within the legal preview of the Bole resolution of 1923 passed in Bombay legislative council. He then told to his workers that during the last two years he has done enough work of awakening the people staying in area bordering the Konkan. Now I would like to spread that awakening to the remaining part of the Konkan. Once the fire of our agitation spreads in the Konkan it will not take much time to spread it to the other part of the country, said Ambedkar. He then told the workers that Chhatrapati Shivaji got his coronation ceremony performed on Raigad fort and he made Raigad the capital of his kingdom. We must, therefore, find out a place somewhere

near the fort of Raigad to inaugurate our movement.

After hearing this shri Anantrao Chitre, who was his associate in his movement instantly said that Mahad is such a place and it comes under the condition of Bole resolution passed by the Bombay legislative council on 4th, august 1923. After hearing Mr. Chitre Dr. Ambedkar stood up from his chair and threw his glance over everybody present there with joy and happiness. He suddenly wore a boundless joy on his face which indicated the joyous acceptance of the proposal. Dr. Ambedkar asked shri Chitre that he should immediately go to Mahad and bring important historical information of the place Mahad. Shri Chitre immediately went to Mahad and brought the necessary information and submitted it to Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar studied the information from legal point of view and come to the conclusion that if the movement is started from there it will have no problem from legal point of view also.

Another reason why he chose Mahad was that the Mahars had their Kingdoms in the Konkan. The invading Aryas conquered them and enslaved them by destroying their kingdoms. Certain traditions followed in the villages there indicate Mahar's importance which they occupied once. Even now they are called as Bhumiputra in the Konkan. On certain festival occasions the Mahars have to call the gods and goddesses then only they will come. This shows the importance of Mahars that they once occupied in that area. Perhaps it was their defeat that reduced them to nullity and poverty and made them lead a miserable life.

It was his belief that in this revolutionary movement at Mahad it will be the Mahars who will play a leading role and it will be the Caste Hindus that will stand in opposition to them. In this struggle, he felt, that the mental slavery by both the people will be finally reduced in its intensity and this will help both the people live in harmony. In this way to bring about revolutionary change in the outlook of both the people, touchable and untouchables, he fixed Mahad as the starting

place of his movement. After hearing Dr. Ambedkar's emotional appeal the people in Konkan, Bombay and also elsewhere organized in big number the public meetings and propagated Ambedkar's idea of holding a big conference at Mahad. It was declared that the conference called as Kolaba District untouchables conference will be organized at Mahad on 19th and 20th March 1927. The conference was decided to be presided over by Dr. Ambedkar and it was insisted by the people. The summary of his presidential address has been given below.

"Gentlemen said Ambedkar that placing myself here as I am equally happy I am also equally unhappy. Once there was a time when the untouchables of this area were much advanced. There was no dearth of military and other government officers belonging to the untouchable communities in this area. They were much advanced in education also. This progress was due to their interest and entry into the military profession. In pre-British days if any caste Hindu travelled along the road the untouchables to avoid their shadow to be fallen on caste Hindu had to quit the road and stand at a distance until that passer by the road has gone away. The untouchables had to tie the earthen pot on their neck to spite in it to avoid polluting the earth. To reveal his identity the untouchable had to tie a black coloured thread to his wrist. It is the entry of English people in this country that gave the untouchables a sigh of relief, and an opportunity to raise their head. Taking advantage of this opportunity the untouchables in this part showed their bravery, courage and brightness in the army. Army list available in Bombay archives pertaining to East India Company is a proof of it. Many were Havalgars, many were Subhedars, Jamedars Clerks and Normal School Teachers in the army and some of them were head masters in the Normal Schools. Education was compulsory for women also. The Mahars, Chambhars etc. who used to salute the caste Hindus bending their head down the same people became the subject of salute by the caste Hindu in the army because of their high

position. They were also much advanced in education. Almost 90% of them were literate and at least 50% of them were well educated. The education was compulsory for both men and women in the army of East India Company. After the end of the company rule this system was slowly discontinued and in 1893 the recruitment of the untouchables in the army was also stopped”.

Ambedkar Sahab went ahead and said that the association which came into existence first in Bombay presidency to work for the amelioration of the untouchables among them “Anarya-Dosh Parihark Mandali”(Association of Reforming The Condition of Untouchables) was the first to come into existence. In 1893 when the government stopped the recruitment of the untouchables this association in consultation with Justice Ranade had sent the petition to the British Government against their decision of stopping the untouchable’s recruitment in the army.

It is again this association which had sent a questionnaire in 1897 to the Indian National Congress stating that what right it had to demand political Reforms without reforming our society. In 1898 when Sir Herbert Risley started the work of census taking then Hon. Risley sahib had sent his questionnaire to this association. This association was founded at Dapoli, District Ratnagiri. The leading man of this association was shri Gopalbuwa Valankar. He worked in Satya Shodhak Samaj and was the close associate of Mahatma Phule. He used to write in Satyashodhak news paper “Dinbandhu”.

But today the condition of untouchables of this area is worst than miserable. How did this change occur? Their answer is that this happened only because the government has stopped their recruitment in the army. To a great extent it is true said Ambrdkar. He also said that this act of prohibiting the entry of the untouchables into the Indian army is an act of betrayal on the part of the British Government in India.

Without the help of the untouchables the Britishers would not have won this country. The causes of the defeat of the Marathas have been stated by the historians differently. Some say that it was the caste rivalry which was the cause some say it was the internal feud that was the cause of the defeat of the Marathas. In my view said Ambedkar that during that time England was equally in trouble? Napoleon had harassed England from all the quarters. England was financially bankrupt. It had asked for money from the East India Company. Had England not succeeded in raising indigenous army here it would have never succeeded in conquering this country. The people who helped in conquering this country for them same are debarred from entering the military now. This is really very strange behavior of the British Government in India.

How English people are opportunistic is indicated by the example of world war in 1914. They needed men in army and hence they removed the ban on untouchable's entry into the army. People were happy thinking that old good days have returned. But it was to their disappointment that as soon as the war was over the government re-imposed the ban on these people in India. Our submissive policy towards the government is the result of this attitude of the government towards us. It is, therefore, better that sooner we give up this attitude the better.

Among the untouchables except the Chambhar caste all others are non-professional communities. They can now think of taking to other professions of their choice. Agricultural profession is good for many of our people. If proper efforts are made they can get government land for cultivation. Since land revenue is an important source of the government it liberally allots the forest land for cultivation. Though there also their caste comes in their way as beaucracy is manned by the caste Hindus but the efforts must be kept on.

But in all this my special appeal to you is the education. The opinion of the government means the opinion of the

beaucracy. And there the Brahmins are very powerful in the government of Bombay presidency. Their monopoly is due to their monopoly in education. Since they are the educationally advanced community they have occupied almost all important positions from the deputy collector to the peon. I think, said Ambedkar that we should copy them. Our people must educate both boys and girls compulsorily. Higher education is very important. What one mamledar can do cannot be done by many lower category men in the government? Therefore, it is necessary that the untouchables by receiving collegiate education must make efforts to secure upper positions in the government. Friends there were many Subhedars, Jamedars, Havalgars etc. in this area once upon a time. They were not poor people. Had they taken interest in the education of their children today the situation would have been quite different in this area. We would not have sat here hours together in the searching sun here today.

Now the light of awakening, self-help and self-respect has been kindled. You must keep this light burning and spread it elsewhere wherever it is possible for you. Dr. Ambedkar concluded his speech thus.

On second day the conference passed resolutions on important subjects. By one resolution the conference appealed to the caste Hindus to help the untouchables secure their civic rights, to employ them in services, offer food to untouchable students and bury their dead animals themselves. Lastly it appealed to Government to prohibit the untouchables by special laws from eating carrion, enforce prohibition; provide them with free and compulsory primary education, and give aid to the Depressed Classes Hostels and make the Bole 'Resolution' a living reality by enjoining upon the local bodies, if necessary, to proclaim section 144 of Indian Criminal Procedure code at their places for its enforcement.

After this the thanks giving was done by shri Shivram Gopal Jadhav. To second shri Jadhav's thanks giving shri Anant Vinayak Chitre stood up and said that this is an

important big gathering of the people collected together for this remarkable conference. I personally feel, said shri Chitre that we should not end this conference without doing something important. In this city of Mahad there is no sufficient provision of drinking water for untouchables. They suffer from scarcity of water. To remove this difficulty of the untouchables the Mahad Municipality has passed a resolution of permitting all people irrespective of caste to take water from all the tanks. But yet the untouchables have not started taking water from the tanks. If we go there collectively along with president and take water the people will start taking water and the work of this conference can be much fruitful.

After hearing this suggestion of shri Chitre all people along with the president went to the Cavadar tank passing through the city in precession took water from the Chavadar Tank and came back and the work of the conference was dissolved.

After the end of the conference Dr. Ambedkar and his associates went to government guest house where they were staying. Among the remaining people some took food and went to their villages and some were taking the food. Mean while a priest of the Veereshwar temple came out on the road and started running here and there shouting that untouchables will now enter the temple and pollute it as they have polluted the Chavadar Tank. The caste Hindus came out with sticks and lathis in their hands and attacked the untouchables wherever they were found. Some were caught on the road when they were going to their villages and were beaten. Some were beaten and injured when they were eating the food. The food was spoiled by throwing the dust and mud in it. In fact caste Hindus did it in the life of the untouchables for centuries together in the past.

Inspector and Mamledar came to Dr. Ambedkar asking him to come with them to pacify the people. The people were already peaceful; there was no question of pacifying them. With some argument with the caste Hindus Ambedkar came back to government guest house and found that there had

gathered many people and among them many were injured. The injured people were taken to the hospital for treatment, while this was taking place the caste Hindus had already sent the message to the villagers that the untouchables in their villages should be harassed and beaten. Some cases were filed against the caste Hindu Gundas of Mahad and some of them were punished by the court. Thus the Mahad movement which started in peace ended in bloodshed due to the inhuman attitude of the caste Hindus towards untouchables. All these details are elaborately discussed in the issues of *Bahishkrit Bharat*. To give the account in summary some details have been stated here in nutshell.

After untouchables drew the water from the Chavadar Tank which was the largest and important tank from where large number of touchable people drew water for their use for 24 hours after the untouchables touched the water the touchables did not use the water of that tank until the tank was purified by proper religious ceremony by throwing the cow-dung and the urine of the cow into the water. It is by performing the purificatory rite on the water of the tank the caste Hindus began using the water from the tank. Dr. Ambedkar roared that we will not allow here after the idea and practice to continue that our touch pollutes water; our touch pollutes the temple that our touch pollutes even the roads and our touch pollutes the school and our touch pollutes the caste Hindus. For this purpose he decided that he and his followers should go to Mahad and launch Satyagraha for taking water from the Chavadar Tank again. It is the purificatory ceremony performed by the caste Hindus to purify the water of Chavadar Tank that kindled the fire of opposition among untouchables against the caste Hindus and the untouchables under their leader Dr. Ambedkar now decided to launch Satyagraha at Mahad and take water again from the Chavadar Tank. Dr. Ambedkar and his followers now declared that they will go to Mahad and perform Satyagraha and take water from the said tank on 25th December 1927.

Many orthodox news papers took critical view of the stand taken by Dr. Ambedkar and they severely criticized the tough stand taken by Dr. Ambrdkar regarding his decision to launch Satyagraha at Mahad. The coming of Bahishkrit Bharat into existence on 3rd April 1927 proved to be a bombshell on Hindu orthodoxy that supported caste practices including the practice of untouchability and stood against all social reforms. Dr. Ambedkar was founder editor of this news paper. What happened in Mahad on 19th and 20th March 1927 has been graphically discussed in Bahishkrit Bharat by Babasaheb Ambedkar. It is firsthand information and as such a valuable original source on the first episode of Mahad. The paper Bahishkrit Bharat was singularly manned by Dr. Ambedkar. His writing in the Bahisgkrit Bharat exhibited the sharpness of his intellect, his urge to bring up the untouchables and the other suffering humanity in India on the path of progress, his courageous and rational attack on his adversaries who wrote against his movement in their news papers, his nationalistic and humanitarian outlook even while criticizing his critics and analyzing Hindu social order and Hindu scriptures. These factors made untouchables of Bombay presidency in particular and many untouchable workers in India in general bold and courages. Some rational minded touchables even began taking favourable view of his Mahad struggle. A woman from Brahmin community wrote a letter to him from Pune stating that she would like to take part in Mahad Satyagraha. Her letter has been published in an issue of Bahishkrit Bharat. Similarly some of the high caste Hindus wrote to him stating their support to him in his struggle for his just cause. His writing in Bahishkrit Bharat on Hindu social order, on Hindu religion, on Indian politics, on Indian social movements started by caste Hindus, on the condition of the untouchables and their suppression and on the remedies to end that suppression was all a great revelation particularly to the suffering humanity in India. Untouchables began referring to him as intellectual jewel. Untouchables who were poor, illiterate and helpless now made a determination to fight under the banner of Dr. Ambedkar's leadership

without any aid from the external sources. The struggle at Mahad was a turning point in the life of 1/5th untouchable population of this country and it was an event extraordinarily unparallel in India's history.

After the purificatory rite performed by the caste Hindus the writing that Babasaheb Ambedkar did in his paper *Bahishkrit Bharat* aroused the feelings of the untouchables in Bombay presidency and elsewhere beyond any measure. Everywhere in the province the public meetings were organized by the untouchables to support the coming Satyagraha at Mahad and the large number of people from everywhere began registering their names for participating the Satyagraha. To support Satyagraha financially people everywhere though poor, came forward to donate money starting from the donation of one Rupee onward. Dr. Ambedkar appealed the people to donate money and material like food grain to support Satyagrahis. His movement was not like the movement of high caste Hindus for whom the rich people donated money in ample measure. It was a movement of the people among whom the majority was half-fed and half-clothed. Poverty had settled in their life because of the helpless condition in which they were placed. How people gave paltry some amount like 8 Annas, One Rupee, Two Rupees, and Five Rupees can be noticed with pinch and pain in the list of donors published in *Bahishkrit Bharat*. This was not the condition of other's organizations in India. They were amply supported financially by rich men and were rarely found in scarcity. Here the case of Ambedkar's movement was quite opposite. With few exceptions the whole of Hindu India stood in opposition to the struggle of the untouchables. This struggle was in a way the struggle of the oppressed by the suppressed and for the depressed. These details of the financial aspect of Dr. Ambedkar's movement discussed in the writings of *Bahishkrit Bharat* show their precarious position in which they launched their movement of liberation who had nothing to give up except losing their chains.

This way by making all preparations people gathered at

Mahad for launching Satyagraha. But at the nick of the time some high caste Hindu leaders of Mahad among whom there were many Brahmins and Banias filed a suit in the court claiming that the Chavadar Tank at Mahad was not a public property and they brought the stay order from the civil court at Mahad.

District collector intervened and stopped the Satyagraha due to the court injunction. The untouchables took the procession in the city and went to the Tank. They took rounds to the tank and came to the place of the meeting where the programme of burning the Manusmriti was conducted. But in all this it was Dr. Ambedkar's presidential speech that he delivered in the end of the episode was the most revolutionary part of the Mahad movement.

Following is the speech in summary: Gentlemen,

"Hindus are such people that they are inspired by the brotherhood towards all. Therefore, there is no dearth of saints and mendicants. They believe that universal soul is everywhere in everybody. Therefore, at Mahad they allow all the animals even the animals of untouchables to drink the water from the Chavadar Tank. They also allow the people of all the religions including Christians and Muslims except untouchables to take water from the Chavadar Tank.

Why this is so is a question that may trouble you. It is only because according to the Hindu Shastras there are five varnas 4+1. These Varnas are based on social inequality. They are unequal in their status customs and behavior. This system has existed since the time immemorial. The untouchables are fifth Varna with their most degraded existence assigned to them by the Hindu Shastras. This will reveal to you why the caste Hindus of Mahad attacked untouchables when they drank water from the Chavadar Tank."

The caste Hindus of Mahad are not allowing the untouchables there not because the touch of untouchables to the water will pollute the water or water will disappear by their touch. It is because the Hindu Dharma Shastras have placed

untouchables lowest in social rank and have branded them as born impure. Therefore, what I am telling you here is that you should not be under this impression that we have called you here merely to drink water from the Chavadar Tank. We are not going to become immortal by drinking water from the Chavadar Tank. We are still alive even though we have not drunk the water from the Chavadar Tank in the past. We have come here to go to the tank and drink water from there merely to tell the Hindu world that like all other human beings we are also the human beings. This Conference Has Been Summoned To Establish Our Claim Of Equality With Others.

This conference is, therefore, unprecedented and none can find any other event which can be compared with this event anywhere in Indian History. If we want to find its parallel we will have to go to the history of France in Europe.

On 24th January 1789 the emperor of France had summoned a meeting of representatives. Some historians blame this French revolution arguing against it that it killed the rich people, confiscated their property. It became the cause of civil wars in Europe for 15 years. I think said Ambedkar that this criticism against the French National Assembly is not just when we see the work done by it. We see that the work done by the French National Assembly not only the France but the entire Europe was benefited by it immensely. In France there were three classes and these were economic classes. The French assembly came together to abolish these classes and make their society unified. There are castes in Hindu society and we have come here together to struggle to make Hindu society a society of one Varna.

French Assembly wanted to bring about political, social and religious unity of French people. We are at the moment interested in social and religious unity. The French assembly issued first declaration on 17 June 1789 by which it abolished three divisions in society and the separate sitting arrangement for these three classes in the assembly. The second declaration was the abolition of the power of Pope to appoint and remove

the clergies in France. Their appointment will now be made by the National Assembly of France.

The third declaration of the assembly was most important. It was a great blessing to humanity of the world. Its aim was to reconstruct the society on the basis of eternal principles equality, liberty and fraternity. In all there are some clauses enumerated in this category. The important among them are as follows:

1) All men are born equal and they will remain so until their death. Some changes can be made in this principle if it is needed for the good of man as exceptions.

2) The aim of politics should be to maintain this principle permanently.

3) All the people are the owners of their birth rights in their mother land. That rights which are not given by the people to an individual, to a group of people or a class of people if those rights are not given by the people then those rights will not be accepted.

4) Any individual is free to enjoy his birth rights. Any restriction on those rights can be possible only to enable the individual to enjoy or exercise those rights. These restrictions can be decided not by religion or by any other agency but only by law.

5) Law will prevent only those acts of individuals which are harmful to the society. All people are free to perform any act which is not prevented by law. Similarly those acts which have not been made compulsory for man to do should not be made compulsory.

6) Law is not a compulsion of one class over another class. What restrictions man should follow is to be decided by people or their representatives. The law it may be protective or punishing it should be applied equally to all without any discrimination. For everything all men are equal. If there is any occasion of discriminating treatment it is only due to human qualities and not by birth.

The path that the French National Assembly has shown has proved benevolent to all humanity. I think we should follow it and endeavour to abolish caste system and make Hindu society a system of one Varna. It is not possible to abolish untouchability without abolishing castes, said Ambedkar in the end of his speech.



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I mounted on the chariot with bow in my hands and it is my satisfaction that bravery has surcharged my body. To establish fame in the world, to enhance the prestige of one's own religion and to release the earth from its burden, now Parth be doubtless, pay attention to this struggle. After hearing this there should be no need of saying anything more.

Year 1st] Friday dated 16th Sept., 1927. [Issue 12th

Day-to-day Problems

1. Bhai Parmanand was once upon a time the great supporter of Hindu Mahasabha in Punjab, but within a short time he came to the conclusion that it is impossible for Hindu Sabha to do the work of Hindu unity. Because unless the Brahmanism is destroyed it is impossible to bring about the Hindu unity. The end of Brahmanism would mean the end of restriction on intercaste marriages and inter-caste dining. But the Hindu Mahasabha instead of removing the restrictions that come in the way of Hindu unity is interested in preserving them. Disgusted with this Bhai Parmanand established a new organisation called 'Jat Pat Todak Mandal' (organisation of removal of castes). Recently this name has been changed as 'Hindu Communism'. Its aim is the destruction of inequality and producing a society of equality, oneness, brotherhood and moral elevation. In America the civil war was fought on the principle of ending the slavery in the world. Before the French revolution took place, the philosophers had taught the people the lessons of good culture and brotherhood. In 1832 the laws of reforms that were passed in England made tremendous

impact on society. The Indian struggle for Swarajya has also revealed the same lesson that unless we reform our society and give equal rights to our brothers we will not be fit for Swarajya. About the Hindu unity it is said that to confront the Muslims there should be unity among the Hindus but that unity has not been forged. The castes and religious cults have proved more powerful. Therefore, it is necessary that forgetting these the unity must be brought about. They must feel that all Hindus are one, of same blood, of same history and the calamity that they are facing is unprecedented. It is therefore necessary that they should become one by inculcating above mentioned feeling in their mind. Today the Hindu society is facing a problem of survival. By keeping faith in their ancestors they must behave for better future in the light of changed circumstances'.

2. Considering the fact that the way in which the Hindu Mahasabha is deceiving the people so far Bhai Parmanand must be congratulated for his unreserved statement about that. It is not that the organisation of Hindu Mahasabha does not understand that without destroying Brahmanism the Hindu unity is not possible. but Brahmanism is its pet child and it never thinks of abandoning it. Brahmanism is such a lovable thing for the members of Hindu Mahasabha that the idea of sacrificing it will never enter their minds. On one hand leave the Brahmanism untouched and on the other hand pretend to forge unity among the Hindus is a game of practising fraud that Hindu Mahasabha is doing. Setting these deceivers aside Bhai Parmanand established his separate organisation called 'Jat Pat Todak Mandal'. We feel that the step which Bhai Parmanand has taken for the cause of Hindu unity is very much praiseworthy.

3. It is a matter of great satisfaction that Bhai Parmanand's principles enunciated for the cause of Hindu unity through Jat Pat Todak Mandal are becoming agreeable to the people slowly. There is an organisation called 'Social Service League' in Mumbai, Chinchpokali. Its branch at Parel runs a school. The students of this school and some wrestlers coming

together celebrated the Ganapati festival this year. Public celebration of Ganapati festival has a recent origin. Hindus are used to celebrate the Muslim festival of Moharram keeping aside their Hindu practices. But when Hindus found that even though they joined the celebration of Muslim festival by becoming one with them the Muslims do not hesitate in killing the Hindus. This has been indicated in Hindu-Muslim riots that took place in Bombay. Then Tilak thought that the Hindu must be turned towards some religious entertainment programme. With this view in mind he invented the idea of Ganapati festival. Since this is the background of the public festival of Ganapati it is bound to be the anti-Muslim. Since this festival is being celebrated under the patronage of Hindu Mahasabha the lecture series particularly against the Muslims are organised. But the incident that took place at Chinchpokali is different from usual happenings. Here instead of attacking the Muslims the Brahmins were attacked. Here the prohibition of inter-dining was lifted up. Here in the programme of eating together the people from Brahmins to scavengers had joined the eating programme. In our opinion, in this interdinning two things took place. The first unprecedented thing that happened here is that in this function the untouchables served the food to the touchables. The interdinning that took place between the touchables and the untouchables there the cook or host was the touchable. Such inter-dining has no meaning in our opinion. Food cooked by the Brahmin cook is eaten by any caste man. If the touchables and the untouchables eat together the food cooked by the Brahmin there is no pollution. If the purpose of interdinning is to destroy Brahmanism then the food cooked by an untouchable cook must be served. This has happened in the programme of Chinchpokali and therefore it has its importance. Second importance of this event is that in this programme the scavengers of the nearby hospital also ate the food sitting together with others in this inter-caste dining. In spite of the fact that upper caste people knew that they were scavengers and still they sat with them closely and ate the food is an act of their mental courage. The credit of this auspicious work goes to our friend Dr. Apte. Our loving request to Dr.

Apte is that this instead of becoming an annual function should become an usual feature of the practices as is the case with Bhai Parmanand's Jat Pat Todak Mandal.

4. This interdinning was participated by 70 to 80 people. Due to shortage of time and inadequate space many people were not invited to the programme of interdinning. However the secretary of Matunga branch of Hindu Mahasabha Dr. Udgaonkar and his associates were invited. Responding to the invitation Dr. Udgaonkar came right in time at 12 o'clock and asked whether the food is ready. After hearing that there is still some time for getting the food ready he instantly left the place. While leaving the place he left a letter behind there. In that letter it was stated that so far Hindu Mahasabha has organised such interdinning programmes without any publicity and hereafter also it will organise such programmes. If Hindu Sabha organises such programmes then why should Dr. Udagaonkar become soar over such programme? Perhaps he must have thought that he was invited to see whether he behaves as he speaks. Really speaking this interdinning was arranged not to test the views of the Hindu Mahasabha. Many orthodox Hindus participate in interdinning but they are afraid of its publicity. Many do it secretly. Those who participate in interdinning should not be afraid of it otherwise the people who are radical in their social outlook will unnecessarily trouble them.

5. In Bombay at Matunga there is a school named 'Kumar Vinay Mandir' run by the National Women Association for the untouchable students. This school was established during the non-cooperation movement launched by Shri Gandhi. During Ganapati festival the students of this school had prepared an entertainment programme for staging in the festival. They made an application to the Brahman Sabha of Shankarwadi in Bombay that they should be allowed to stage their programme in front of the Ganapati of Shankarwadi of Brahman Sabha. The Brahman Sabha took many meetings, some times one body took the decision of allowing the untouchable students to stage the programme but upper body cancelled it. In this way many meetings were called to take

the decision. Sometimes the matter went to the court which permitted the Brahman Sabha to allow the untouchable students to stage their programme. To take the decision the meeting of the Brahman Sabha was again called but the majority of the members did not attend the meeting.

6. However with great difficulty the permission was granted. Mr. Shetty the Head Master of the school brought the boys but they performed their programme from a distance, took the view of Ganapati from the distance and went away.

7. They should have viewed the issue thinking whether the unity among the Hindus is not more important than the unity among the members of the Brahman Sabha. But the people who have been deceiving the people in the name of the nation will never feel shy of protecting their self-interests. In this episode it was clear that if alien people like untouchables are to be allowed to come in then there is bound to be rift in the members of the Brahman Sabha. If the reformers in the Brahman Sabha were courageous enough to face this problem then where was the need of making show of it.

8. The Brahmanism is a powerful justification. Its supporters are capable and quite shrewd also. They will grant only such concessions to the untouchables which they consider fit to be given and will pretend that they have given much. But such Brahmins must remember that the untouchables now are not that innocent which they were before. They are quite alert now. They know what they want and if they got it they will accept it only by examining it. The untouchables want to remove their stigma of untouchability permanently attached to them. But unless there take place inter-caste marriages they will not think that the practice or notion of untouchability has gone. The untouchability will go only when the Brahmanism had died out. The Brahmanism will be presumed to be died out only when the inter-caste marriages take place quite regularly. This makes the issue amply clear that what the untouchables actually want. The members of the Brahman Sabha must ponder over it seriously.

9. Shetty the Head Master of the school urged the members of the Brahman Sabha that they should make the boys stand anywhere they want them to stand but allow them to perform their show. It is because of Shetty the school boys suffered humiliation. Our request to him is that he should see that this is not repeated at least next year. Had there no alternative to Hinduism the untouchables also would have touched the feet of the Brahmins as Shetty did. But that time has not come before us because fortunately for us there are other ways open for our Moksha.

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BAHISHKRIT BHARAT (Untouchable India)

Year 1st

Friday, dated 16th September, 1927

Mahars and Their Vatan

(2)

In the last issue we discussed the work associated with the Vatan, today we will discuss the emoluments that the Mahars get due to their Vatan work.

What Mahars get for their work

If we enquire about this we will come to know that the Mahars get generally the three kinds of income for their work. (1) Inam land (2) Baluta and (3) Cash payment. This does not mean that these three kinds of income are realised everywhere. At some places Inam land is there and in some places it is not. In some places there is payment and Baluta. In some places

the land and Baluta are there. The idea behind this is that the Mahars should get at least Rs. 5 to 6 per month. Whether it is through the land or payment or through Baluta he must get at least this much income per month is the idea behind this system. Sometimes this income of the Mahars may be less but it can never be more. In these days of soaring prices the government extracts the work from the Mahars only on paltry sum emoluments. In this paltry sum emoluments also

It Is Not Sure That It Will Go To Their Share Always.

Though the Mahars have Vatani lands it is not certain that it will always remain with them. Really speaking the Vatani lands of Mahars should never be under their possession. Because from the year 1827 the Vatani land cannot be sold to anybody outside their kith and kin. But inspite of this legal injunction many lands of the Mahars are now under the possession of aliens. The Vatani lands were given to the Mahars as the reward for the government work that they do. Some lands may be restored by going to the court but some cases are so old that they can come under the court clause known as time-barred. The Bombay High Court has given the decision that if the father has alienated the Vatani land and if his son or successor makes case within 12 years of his father's death that Vatani land can be restored to his son. But if he does it after twelve years his right to that land lapses. However recently the Privy Council has given a decision according to which the High Court decision of time-barred is not applicable at all. Therefore, without bothering for the decision of the High Court on time-barred those Vatandars who have lost their land under time barred clause should reopen their cases and get the justice done to them. But until this happens there is no alternative to them to continue their services rendering half-starved. The district Collector has been given wide powers and he can easily restore the lands that have come under the clause of time barred. But if the Collector waits until upper court gives its decision then

It Will Be So That Mahars Should Work and Others Should Eat,

Is the unhealthy practice that has continued and will

continue hereafter also. Those who have lost their land have been completely robbed and those who have yet retained their lands it is doubtful that how long will they retain their lands. In olden days the value of movable things was not much. The immovable property was valued much because it was safe from the thieves and dacoits. The Vatan lands were permanently given to the Mahars. They did not worry much about the future of their children etc., thinking that this kind of arrangement was always better and hence they accepted it. Whether it is the prime minister of the state, Commander-in-Chief of the army, or treasurer, or a registrar or accountant or village headman (Patil) or a village accountant (Kulkarni) all these accepted the system of owning the land called Inam lands and the land belonged to them hereditarily. They all accepted the land instead of cash payment and subsisted on it for years together. Now the government thinks that these lands have been given to the Mahars as their emoluments for the services that they render to the government. Some times it takes away lands from the Mahars stating that they have excess lands. The fresh example of such action is of Baramati. There is a village near Baramati called Sangvi. The Mahars of Sangvi had a Vatan land. So long as this land was a dry agricultural land the government never bothered that whether this land is sufficient enough to sustain the Mahars that cultivate it. But when the newly dug canal of river Nira passed near this land and because of water supply the income from the land grew enormously the eyes of the government turned towards this land. Under the pretext that the Mahars are getting more income they took away half the land from them. But when the Mahars were not ready to part with this land they were punished by law. This way when the land of the Mahars is alienated there is no hope that it will be got back and whatever land they have retained for that there is no hope that the government will allow them to retain that also permanently.

The other source of income of the Mahars is their Baluta (emolument in kind such as corn etc.)

There Is No Guarantee That They Will Get Their Baluta Regularly

Though the Mahars are the servants of the government they get their Baluta (income in kind) from the Rayats. They have to secure this income from Rayats. Under this system it sometimes happens that even though they did the government work quite regularly and promptly there is no guarantee that they will get their Baluta from the Rayats regularly. Under the Baluta system they have also to attend the work of the Rayats regularly. If there is any cause of Rayat's displeasure he stops giving Baluta. The law does not support the Mahars in collecting their Baluta from the Rayats. Therefore, the system is basically wrong.

There is another defect in the Baluta system. At the time of famine the government frees the Rayats from the land tax. When this happens the government also frees the Rayats from their condition of paying the Baluta. During the famine the policy of freeing the Rayats from the land tax is alright but freeing Rayats from paying the Baluta is not an appropriate idea. In this the Rayats get advantages but what about the Mahars? The Mahars are not freed from their work. They do their work as usual. The Mahars are the government servants. The government does not ask its servants to take less emoluments because of the famine. Then why this injustice in case of Mahars only? Such is the Mahar Vatan. Whether to maintain it by reforming it or end it permanently is a question of great importance for the progress of the Mahar community. Let anybody think anything about it but in our opinion

The Mahar Vatan Must Be Abolished

Vatan is very much endearing thing. No Vatan holding community will ever be ready to give up its Vatan. Not only this but they will even be ready to sacrifice their life for protecting the Vatan. Under the circumstances our pleading that the Mahar Vatan must be abolished is a daring step. Some people even blame us that we are the hidden enemies of the our own people, but there are sufficient causes of our forming this opinion. If these causes are revealed to the people then only they will think why we say this.

We say that Mahar Vatan must be abolished because due

to the Vatan the Mahars have lost their sense of self-respect. The system of collecting the Baluta from the Rayats is the most heinous and humiliating with no self-respect on the part of its collectors (Mahars). His Baluta is his slavery nowhere noticed even in a slave system of economy. Baluta means the slavery. But instead of creating this impression it has created an impression that the Baluta means begging and Mahar is a beggar. In any society once the distinctions such as superior and inferior, master and servant, beggar and giver are formed then those who have formed the habit of calling themselves superior sometimes without any merit in them feel that they are superior and when others do not respect them thus they feel annoyed and sometime punish those whom they consider as inferior. Others who have formed the habit that they are inferior form the habit of obeying and respecting those who have formed the habit that they are superior. The theory of superior by birth and inferior by birth is formed this way. When this perpetuates generation after generation it mars their humanity and self-respect. This is seen in the system of Mahar Vatan. By giving Baluta to the Mahars we sustain their life is the feeling of the Rayats therefore, their arrogance and rudeness has grown towards Mahars. In villages abusing the Mahars is a common thing. Small boy from Brahmin or Maratha or from any other upper castes abuses even an elderly person without bothering for his age. Not only the abuses but many times the Mahars are beaten even for minor cause. When the high caste men hurl all filthy abuses on their women even then also the Mahars have no guts even to look at them, no question of staring at them. Even an ant bites when stepped on it but Mahars are like poor cow which is absolutely harmless. Only language that the Mahars know is that "I am your slave, treat me as your shoes." He does not know any other language. This is quite obvious also because from birth to death he lives only on the food provided by others. How can there be anything like self-enlightenment. For producing self-enlightenment one must take the responsibility of leading his life on his own independently. He must struggle in a given circumstances. He must struggle against his adversaries and

attain success. The Mahars never understood the responsibility of leading a good life as Baluta, the income from begging was assured to them. What is our future was never a question before the Mahars. A man grown up in such an environment is unable to take steps further like the old worn out bull and there is nothing surprising in it.

Another reason why we argue for the abolition of Mahar Vatan is:

Vatan Has Marred The Ambition In Mahars completely

Today we see the upper castes constantly struggling. Somebody wishes to become a Barrister, somebody wants to become a Collector, somebody wishes to become a Manager and somebody wishes to become an industrialist. Thus among the upper caste people there is a competition to become somebody. As against this the Mahars are found lying down like stones. What is the reason for this? The reason for this is that the Mahars have no ambition. For any man he needs an opportunity for his progress but at the same time he must have an ambition that he should become somebody. If there is opportunity but no ambition the men in such condition have always gone failure. On the contrary if men are ambitious there even if opportunities are not there they will create opportunities and exploit it, and climb the height of glory. Why do the Mahars do not have this kind of ambition in them is an important question. The answer is very easy. They have become beggars only because of their Vatan.

To be the gatekeeper of the village is the biggest ambition of the Mahar. If the Mahar is to turn his attention towards other ways of his progress he must be freed from his Vatan which has bound him to his slavery. once his road to Vatan is closed then the roads to all the directions are open to him. Once the road to their slavery (Vatan) is closed they will have their freedom to turn to any direction of their choice. This will be so only when the Mahar Vatan is abolished. On this some people will argue that why to run after a mirage leaving the things that are already in hands. But this argument is of timid

people. Those who keep the brave proposals before them such views are worthless. For better future give up the worst and pursue for that which is worth pursuing.

There is a third reason also

Why Mahar Vatan must be abolished

The progress of Mahars is not possible unless their Vatan is abolished. So long as their Vatan is there the Mahars will not be ready for their progress. But it is also true that as long as the Mahars remain attached to their Vatan others also will not allow them to make their progress. We are aware that some upper caste people will not agree with us. As a result of anti-untouchability movement some Mahars in some villages have given up begging the bread in the village, carrying away the dead animals of the Rayats etc. They are trying to live a clean life. We have been hearing that in such villages the Mahars are harassed in every walk of life. In a village a Mahar raised a Pandal using cloth for decoration in marriage of his daughter. He also used light (Gasbatti). Thinking this as an insult the touchable Hindus of the village beat him and his mother. In another village a Mahar put the tiles on the roof of his house. The caste Hindus of the village threatened him that they will burn his house if he has not removed the tiles. There are many examples of harassing the Mahars merely because they purchase the land. The tragic part of such events is that even Mahars do not support such a courageous Mahar. The reason is not that Mahars do not like reform. But they are worried about the opposition of the caste Hindus in the village. The touchable at once use their weapon of stopping the Baluta. If the Baluta is stopped how will the Mahars sustain themselves? If the caste Hindus threaten the Mahars that they will stop the Baluta payment they at once surrender before them as there is no alternative to him. Boycott against the Mahars is a readily available weapon which the caste Hindus use against the Mahars without much consideration. The bread which provide the Mahars their livelihood the same becomes the weapon of their death. Whether Mahar Vatan survives or goes depends upon the village head(Patil), Kulkarni (village accountant), and

Mamledar. Though these three do not belong to the same caste, however, they are generally united on the problem of Mahar Vatan. Because they are one on issue that the Mahar is a slave and he should behave always like a slave. This shows that the Mahars have been leading the life of sub-human beings for generations together. Under the circumstances so long as their life sustenance depends on the caste Hindus they are not free and so long as they are not free the freedom in their life is not possible.

Karnatak Untouchable Students' Hostel at Belgaum

The leader of the untouchables in Karnatak Shri Swami Devaray Ramaji Ingale, the member of the District School Board Belgaum is doing a selfless service to the untouchables. he left government service in 1922 and founded the 'Karnatak Bahishkrit Sangh'. By touring the villages through his speeches and discussions with Mahars, Mangs, Chambhars and Dhors etc; he has made them conscious of their rights. In villages, Talukas, Districts and in province he organised conferences and brought to the notice of the government the injustices that were done to the untouchables in social, political, religious and educational fields. Seeing that the progress is not possible without education he founded students' hostel for the untouchable students on behalf of the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha that was founded by All India leader Dr. Ambedkar, on 1st June, 1927. The sympathy is shown to this hostel in Karnatak by Brahmin, non-Brahmin leaders and some government officials. Not only this but even Nagpur's Dharmaveer Raje Laxmanrao Bhosale and Jahagirdar of Kurundwad have also patronised the hostel. The Belgaum Municipality has resolved to provide the building and the District School Board has resolved to give scholarship to its students. The Karnatak untouchable community will remain grateful to Hon. Angadi, the President of District School Board and Hon. B.K.Dalvi the President Belgaum Municipality for their help from time to time.

On behalf of the Karnatak untouchable community, I pray that all the rulers of the princely states, Jahagirdars, Deshpandes and Desais should patronise the institutes efforts

of educating the untouchables and make the name of Karnataka great.

Yours
Shivappa Laxman Asode

Open Questions to Dr. Kurtkoti

My regards to Dr. Kurtkoti presently staying at Ahmednagar. In a public meeting at Ahmednagar on 2-9-1927 I had asked you some questions in open. By giving evasive answers you left the meeting abruptly. I am again asking you the same questions publically.

Question (1) whether you feel or not that there should be one caste, one God, one religious book of all the Hindus?

Question (2) Instead of merely saying that there should be the amelioration of the untouchables are you ready to participate in drinking the water with untouchables? Is it your opinion that others also should participate in that?

Question (3) Do you think that all the Hindus have every right to enter the temples? Are you ready to take the untouchables into the temples with you.

This is my humble request to you to please reveal that out of the questions asked above what will be possible for you to do?

Yours
Pandharinath Sitaram Patil

Consultations

Public Meetings, Functions And Other News

Instructions to Mahars

By

Shri Patitpavandas

Near Nagpur there is a place called Kamti. There on 21-8-27 the day being Sunday Shri Shankar Mukund Baile went to the confectioner to bring curd required for worship (puja). He

asked him about his caste and Shankar told him that he is a Mahar by caste. He asked him why he has applied Sandalwood paste on his forehead? On this Shankar told him that he is a Hindu. Then the confectioner and his brother beat him severely, they erased the sandalwood paste on his forehead with shoe. They abused the Mahars and Chambhars like anything. The Mahars of Kamti have become angry and are thinking to change their religion. Wherever this kind of injustice is done there the untouchables are thinking to leave Hinduism. Hindus must awake from their deep slumber otherwise there are chances of Hinduism being perished.

Pre-Preparations For The Satyagraha at Mahad

On 11-9-27 in Damodar Hall at Poyabavadi, Mumbai there was a meeting of the selected leaders of the untouchables. this meeting was presided over by Shri Ganapatrao Chandorkar, Havaladar. In the beginning Dr. Ambedkar explained the need of satyagraha at Mahad and how it can be organised. He also told them that the satyagraha should be launched after the Diwali festival. After this the speeches were made by Shri Vanawali, Shri Jadhav, Shri Gaikwad, Shri Nadgaonkar and Balaram Ambedkar. They all favored the idea of launching the Satyagraha. Then Shri Shivatarkar made a suggestion that there should be a separate committee for Mahad Satyagraha and this proposal was seconded by Shri Gangavane and then it was passed unanimously. Then the meeting was dissolved after proposing the vote of thanks. The first meeting of the Satyagraha committee took place on 15-9-27 in the office of Dr. Ambedkar. The dates of Satyagraha at Mahad were fixed on 25th and 26th December, 1927. In this meeting Shri Bhimrao Masuji Salunke donated Rs. 5, Shri Pandu Babaji Jamgekar donated Rs. 5, Shri Govind Ramaji Adarekar donated Rs. 5, Shri Arjun Nadgaonkar donated one rupee, Shri Damodar B. Kamble donated Rs. 3, Shri Balu Dalvi donated one rupee, Shri Ramaji Pavaskar donated one rupee, Shri S.G. Jadhav donated Rs. 2, Shri Mhaiskar Ramji Govind donated Rs. 2, Shri Bhaguram Ramji donated one rupee two annas. In all the total of Rs. 26 and 4 annas two Paise were donated to the fund of Mahad Satyagraha.

Ambarnath

On 8-8-27 a public meeting of the untouchables was organised at Ambarnath, Taluka Kalyan, District Thane. In the meeting following resolutions were passed.

- (1) Loyalty to the Government.
- (2) The government's barren land should be given to the untouchables for cultivation.
- (3) The government should appoint Shri M.K.Jadhav, B.A. Hon. as deputy Collector as early as possible.
- (4) The government should open a separate school for untouchable students where 30 students are available.
- (5) Protest against the atrocities against the untouchables at Mahad. After the conference at Mahad the atrocities that are going on against the untouchables from the touchables, the government should take cognizance and stop the atrocities.
- (6) As resolved in the Mahad conference no Mahar should eat the flesh of the dead animal.
- (7) The parents should not perform the marriage of their children unless the daughter attains the age of 16 years and son attains the age of 22 years.
- (8) In every village the untouchables should establish a school of physical training in exercises and learn the marshal games and marshal art. Those who become adept should receive the prize on birth day of Chhatrapati Shivaji.
- (9) Every untouchable should become the subscriber of Bahishkrit Bharat.

In the end of the meeting Rs. 10 were given as donation to the Bahishkrit Bharat.

Summary of the Selected Letters

From the Madhe Polakhandur, Nagpur state Shri Gopal Hanu Landage, informs us that the Mahars of this area do not eat the flesh of the dead animals and they also do not carry the dead animals of the Rayats and are leading a clean life. Since then the touchables are harassing us. They have declared social boycott against us and have closed the market places for us. We are therefore, condemning the Hindu religion. Living in this religion is the cause of our misery. Therefore, it is beneficial for us that we should leave Hindu religion. Without this the caste Hindus will not open their eyes.

English Marathi Night School

Under the auspices of Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha at Kamatipura, Mumbai, 1st lane, a night school is being run for the last two months. In school both English and Marathi education is being imparted. Those that are interested should write or meet the following organisers.

organisers.

Nirmal Limbaji Gangavane
Shivaram Laxman Sonavane
Ramji Dhondiba Bhalekar

Acknowledgement with Opinion

Students of Ashram

The first report of Shrimadjagadguru Parmahansa Shri Sachidanand Maharaj students of Ashram, Satyapur-Dharwad. The students who have passed 4th standard Marathi school exam are admitted here in the Ashram. Both touchable and untouchable students are admitted in the Ashram. In the current year there are 6 students from shepherd caste, 4 Reddy caste, 2 Lingayats, one from fisher caste and 3 untouchable students. A committee has been appointed to look after the management of the Ashram and Shri Hanamreddi Timareddi Kalwad is its honorary secretary. During the year 1926-27 its income was Rs. 2055, 11 annas and 5 Paise. Shri Mallappa

Benakappa Sambrani a Chambhar by caste, donated Rs. 100. This kind of Ashramas are essential to end the practice of untouchability. From the report it seems that the work of the Ashrama is going on satisfactorily.

A Big Public Meeting Of Untouchables Of Amravati.
Satyagraha To Enter The Ambabai Temple At Amravati.
(From our reporter)

Explosion of The Plot of the Priests

We were hearing so far about the ghosts that walk with reverse steps. But we just had an occasion to see such ghost walking in reverse. Among the untouchables of Amravati there has occurred an awakening for their birth rights and to secure those they have prepared to make any sacrifice and by seeing this the enemies of human race are suffering from stomach ache. By any available means they have decided to suppress the movement of the untouchables.

Thinking that open opposition is difficult in this changing time they are trying to defame those leaders from upper castes who support the movement of the untouchables. the dirty smell that is coming out from their mouth is smelt by many rational minded men now a days.

Here the President of the Maratha High School Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh and the Superintendent of the Maratha Boarding Shri Gopalrao Deshmukh are helping the movement of the untouchables with much enthusiasm. But some people are trying to defame these servants of the people. Shri Dange and Chimote, these two Brahmins have sent a letter to Shri Appasaheb Deshmukh the main pillar of the Maratha Highschool. In this letter praising a little the work of Appasaheb Deshmukh and wishing somewhat well of the Maratha highschool it is stated that the students of the Maratha Highschool are forced to participate in the procession of the untouchables. They have also sent the similar letter to the education officer and have tried to poison the ears of the public. Those to whom Javalkar calls as the enemies of the people they are these people.

But whatever that has happened; happened for good. In the public meeting of the untouchables held on 28-8-27 the wickedness of these people has been revealed. In this meeting Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh said that "If the Maratha Highschool will be closed because of the participation in untouchables movement we on the ground of principles will not bother about that. In this meeting the reporters providing false news for defaming the genuine social workers were present. When the speakers were criticising the members of the Devasthan (temple) Committee these orthodox people were feeling bad making their faces nervous.

In the third session of the Fergusson College Parliament the resolution of approving the mixed marriages was passed.

The lady students union of Elphinstone College Mumbai has passed the resolution with majority approving mixed marriages. Only four lady students opposed it. The Principal says that this news is wrong. But then what is the truth?

On Thursday dated 25-8-27 a public meeting was organised at Poyabavadi, Mumbai under the Chairmanship of Shri S.K.Bole to protest against the paper 'Peshwa.'

In the Department of Police in London there are 50 women who take care of the interests of women and girls. Their status is equal with the status of male police.

Hindu Unity

Madhya Pradesh Hindu Sabha has passed the following resolutions.

- (A) Unity means oneness of all the castes and sub-castes. This oneness means reorganisation of the Hindu society by breaking the castes, on Goon and Karma (merit and work)
- (B) All castes must merge in one caste.
- (C) Inter-caste marriages must be permitted and should be made lawful.

Removal of Untouchability

Untouchability by birth and heredity has no base in Hindu religion. Therefore, the practice of untouchability must be abolished and as a part of this programme

- (1) Untouchables should be allowed to take water from wells where all others draw the water.
- (2) They should be allowed to study in the schools and colleges where others also study.
- (3) Like all other castes they should also be allowed to enter the temples, hotels and inns.

On 31-7-27 at Bhusaval the Arya Samaj has admitted Shri Rambhau Raghunath Jamadhade, a Christian and on 11-8-27 it has admitted one Francis, a Christian to Hinduism. Appreciable but what is their caste now? Are they allowed to enter the temples and take water from the wells?



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I mounted on the chariot with bow in my hands and it is my satisfaction that bravery has surcharged my body. To establish fame in the world, to enhance the prestige of one's own religion and to release the earth from its burden, now Parth be doubtless, pay attention to this struggle. After hearing this there should be no need of saying anything more.

Year 1st] Friday dated 30th Sept., 1927 [Issue 13th

Day-to-day Problems

1. When the temple committee of Shri Ambe at Amravati communicated in writing the untouchables that it is not possible for them to allow the untouchables to enter the temple the untouchables there decided to launch their Satyagraha for temple entry. But before this takes place in order to find out whether the compromise is possible between the two parties Barrister Bagve prepared a plan for compromise. There were three conditions in the plan. These were (1) on some distance from the image of Shri Ambe there should be raised a platform of partition and inside the partition nobody except the priest should go. (2) Except for two hours during the day time the temple should remain open for all the time for the Hindus (3) During the time mentioned above the untouchables should not go to the temple for worshipping. It seems that this compromise proposal has not been prepared thoughtfully. By entering the temple the untouchables want to prove two things. the first thing is that they want to prove that by their entry the temple is not polluted or by touching the image its holiness does not disappear. By first condition, it cannot be said that

the unholiness of untouchables is washed away. So long as the untouchables are not allowed to go upto the image of the deity it cannot be said that their impurity has been washed away. If the untouchables are not allowed to touch the image of the deity as does the priest it can not be said that the untouchables have become the touchables religiously. Of course in one way it can be justified that by this condition none can go upto the image of the deity except the priest or priests. Checking everybody to go beyond the basement is specially to prevent the untouchables to go near the deity. This is not a remedy to establish untouchables' religious equality. Instead of pulling somebody down it is better to take somebody up who is below. The second and third resolution in the condition are highly dangerous. If they are accepted the whole movement of the untouchables will go in vain. If these two conditions are accepted it would mean that the time during which the untouchables will enter the temple there will be none else except the untouchables and the untouchables will not be there during the time that when the touchables will come there in the temple to worship the deity. This would mean that though it is in reality only one temple it will be divided into two- one for the touchables and another for the untouchables as suggested in the time division for the visit of these two communities separately. In one part of time the temple will be for the touchables and another part of the time it will be for the untouchables. the only result of this scheme will be that the untouchables at last found their entry into the temple.

2. It is a matter of happiness that the temple committee did not approve this proposal. In a similar way Barr. Bagve must also be feeling happy. Because the compromising formulae which has been put forth, we are sure, must not be his. He must be knowing that this kind of compromising formulae will not be acceptable to the temple committee and the committee will land itself in trouble. This must be his view. Now the committee has no guts to tell the untouchables that they should not launch the Satyagraha. The Satyagraha is the only alternative before the untouchables of Amravati.

3. It seems that the Mangs of Amravati will not participate

in Satyagraha. Because some Mangs have published a letter in the Amravati newspaper called 'Uday'. In the letter it is stated that some Mahars took our signatures in the name of social reform in our society. But actually it was for the entering the temple of Shri Ambe. Such attempts disturb the age old traditions of the Hindus. Hence this is not acceptable to us (Mangs). We Mangs are prepared to behave as we have behaved in the past. Our signatures have been wrongfully taken by the Mahars as support to their temple entry.

4. Not only some touchables of India but the people of the whole world have stood against the practice of untouchability and the Mangs of Amravati are prepared to hold their old ignoble position is a shameless act. But we do not think that the Mangs have taken their stand on their own. Those people are either threatened by some or their selfishness has come in their way.

5. There is no reason to stop the Satyagraha even though the Mangs are not participating in it. The strength of Satyagraha depends upon the determination of those who have decided to launch it and not upon the number of Satyagrahis, if their determination is firm. Therefore, the untouchables of Amravati who wish to launch Satyagraha must March ahead like the marching time which does not wait for anybody. This should never be forgotten by them.

Correspondence

Ganapati festival at Murtijapur

the Mahars of Murtijapur had installed their Ganapati in the temple of Goddess Mariai during the public festival of Ganapati. Seeing that the Mahars are celebrating the Ganapati festival by installing Ganapati the Marathas there became damn angry with Mahars. The Marathas called some five to six Mahars and warned them that they should remove their Ganapati from there otherwise they will be beaten like anything. The Mahars requested them saying that like the

Marathas the Mahars are also Hindus but the Marathas had no effect of their pleading on them. Ultimately the Mahars removed their Ganapati from there and installed it in some other place. In the end, on 4-9-27 there was a public meeting under the chairmanship of Shri Uchandekar(Brahmin) and in that meeting Shri Keshavrao Deshmukh condemned the Marathas for their foolishness. Shri Deshmukh is a very liberal minded man who treats untouchables with love. Because of his sympathy everybody kept quiet. When Mahars celebrate Ganapati festival by installing the image of Ganapati there is a hue and cry. Whether the untouchables will remain alive if they fetch water from the well, God alone knows.

Real Ganapati Festival at Karwar

Arrival of Chitrav Shastri

(From a correspondent)

In the Ganapati festival that just ended here, the President of the Maharashtra branch of Hindu Maha Sabha Shri Shidheshwar Shastri Chitrav had come here and he established a branch of the Sabha here at Karwar. Nadkarni brothers Shri S.D.Nadkarni and Shri M.D.Nadkarni had specially invited Shri Chitrav Shastri for lecture on the occasion of Ganapati festival. This was real public festival because in this festival both touchables and untouchables freely mixed with each other without any discrimination in all the rituals and functions of the festival. Some anti-social elements tried to create some mischief but Nadkarni brothers put down these anti-social elements successfully and made the festival a success. In the place of festival a scene was portrayed and placed for viewing of the public.

Saint Chokha Mela (Mahar) was employed as a forced labour along with other labourers by the Sultan to repair a fort. When the work was going on the bastion of the fort crumbled down and some people died beneath the dilapidated material and Chokhamela was one of them. Nobody enquired about the dead bodies of the workers. The saint Namdeo (tailor) somehow received the news of the death of the Chokhamela

accidentally. Saint Namdeo came there out of his love for Chokhamela, he carried away the dead body of Chokhamela. Shri Chitrav Shastri gave four lectures here on the unity of the Hindus.

BAHISHKRIT BHARAT

(Untouchable India)

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Year 1st

Friday, dated 30th September, 1927

Mahars and Their Vatan

(3)

How Mahars suffered under Vatan system and to free them from their slavery the abolition of their Vatan is the only way out has already been discussed in earlier pages of Bahishkrit Bharat. Today after discussing how to abolish the Vatan system we have decided to close this discussion on Vatan. As the government has made the provision of protecting the Vatan system it has also similarly made the provision of abolishing the Vatan. This provision has been made in the clause 15 of the Vatan law. It is as below.

If the Vatan holder is willing to surrender his Vatan and the District Collector also agrees with him then Vatan holder and his successors should be freed from the Vatan is the content of this law. If the Vatan holder gives this in writing and the Collector agrees with him he is freed. Therefore, there is no new law needed to abolish the Mahar Vatan.

Only On what condition Mahar

Vatan is to be abolished should be explained

On this, it is enough that, an explanatory note, needs to be added to the original law. To abolish Vatan Mahars should give up all their work attached to the Vatan. They should not ask for any compensation for that. Inam (government) lands which are given to the Mahars must be retained with them. since the Mahars will stop doing the work of the Rayats that they were doing under the Baluta system the Rayats should also stop paying anything that they were paying earlier as Baluta. If the Baluta that the Mahars were receiving is stopped and the same is paid to the servants the government can very easily appoint the paid servants of the village.

Mahar Vatan must be abolished instead of introducing some reforms in it. The Mahar Vatan harms the cause if some reform is made in it. It is likely that Mahars may remain attached to it. There is no comparison between Kulkarni Vatan and the Mahar Vatan. The Kulkarni Vatan empowers him whereas Mahar Vatan degrades him to the slavery. Hence Kulkarnis agitate to regain their Vatan if it is lost. Whereas Mahars will rarely do it. The Kulkarnis struggle to maintain it because it gives them power over Rayats and Mahars. But the Vatan makes the Mahars a very humble servant of the Kulkarnis and the Rayats. All exercise their power over Mahars but Mahars exercise their power over none. Instead of reforming it; it must be ended. We are happy that the government also shares our view. In 1925 Shri Nikalje M.L.A. had introduced a resolution of this kind in the Legislative Assembly that the Mahars should get Rs. 15 as their monthly pay and to this the answer Mr. Montford had given is worth considering. It is difficult to improve the condition of Mahars because in the villages the Mahars have the habit of living respectfully and self-reliantly. It is true that Mahars are very much poor in their condition. Right from his birth to his death he claims the right of begging and leads the life of beggary. What else can, such a man be other than the poor? I feel that this resolution keeping the Mahars confined to their village

work is wrong. If the Mahars are to be made happy we must create the condition by which they quit their village and seek their fortune elsewhere". If the Mahar Vatan is abolished then only the Mahars will go out of their village. It is clear that Montford suggested not reform but the end of the Mahar Vatan which alone will free them from their village work to which the Mahars are bound hereditarily.

Some Reforms

- (1) Their Baluta and bread must be stopped by converting this gain into cash money payment. In fact by the law of 1844 Kulkarni and Patil became the paid servants of the government. Their payment was decided upon the total revenue of the village and they were paid from the treasury of the government. But this was not applied to the Mahars and the reason is not known. But under any circumstances this kind of system must be applied to the Mahars also to grow the feeling in them that what they get is their salary and not their begging. Once the Vatan is converted into employment then the Mahars are free to give it up anytime as per their choice. Another reform should be that whatever the Mahars receive from the Rayats as Baluta that should be in cash and not in kind. The work of the Rayats should also be optional and not compulsory. if any Mahar does not want to do the work of the Rayat he should be free to discontinue that work.

Soon this bill will be introduced in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. Those who wish to make any suggestion can do so by sending a letter to us.

Public Meeting of the Untouchables

In Pune on behalf of the untouchables a public meeting was called to congratulate Shri Tilak. On this occasion Shri Dhanpat Tilak said: "At present there is a wave of Shuddhi* movement in India. Sanghatan(purity) means the destruction of Chaturvarna system by uniting all the castes and sub-castes

* Shuddhi means reconversion of those Hindus to Hinduism who have converted to other religion.

together. The constructing separate temples and water tanks by the untouchables would mean that they are separate from the Hindu society. In this way do not widen the ditch between the touchables and the untouchables. calling the people as this is Mahar this is Chambhar. The Brahmins have divided the people. This is high time to know the shrewdness of the Brahmins in doing this. Producing divisions in you the efforts are being made to continue the untouchability in the country. As government bureaucracy is opposed to the Swarajya similarly the Brahmin bureaucracy is opposed to the eradication of the untouchability. The meanminded orthodox priestly class is trying to trample the rights of the untouchables. But they must remember that the justice is not on the side of the Brahmins. It is on the side of the untouchables. In the end all took the tea together. Shri Shridharpant the son of Lokmanya Tilak took the tea prepared by an untouchable and set an example for others.

Mumbai

First meeting for the preparations
Of Satyagraha at Mahad
will be begun
From 25th December 1927

On 17th September 1927 the first public meeting to launch the Satyagraha at Mahad from 25th December 1927 was organised in Bombay under the chairmanship of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar. A huge public particularly from the untouchable classes had gathered there for the meeting. Shri Ganapatrao Jadhav, Dhondiram Gaikwad, Salunke Buwa and Shivatarkar spoke in the beginning explaining the need for the Satyagraha. Then the President Dr. Ambedkar Saheb explained the whole issue in a very simple language. He said that the untouchability is not a blot on us it is a blot on our mothers and sisters because those who regard themselves as touchables think that their mother is superior to the mother who gives birth to the children that are regarded as untouchables. But the real fact is that every mother delivers her child only after nine months. Hence no woman is superior to other woman. Therefore, those who

regard themselves as superior to others we should teach them a befitting lesson and tell them that we are not inferior to anybody. Every human being is equal religiously. Therefore, by launching Satyagraha we must establish our rights. Those who are capable to participate the Satyagraha must do that and those that are unable to participate the Satyagraha should at least help it by way of donation. Then after proposing the vote of thanks the meeting came to the close.

A Public Meeting on Behalf of the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha in Bombay

For making preparations for the ensuing Satyagraha at Mahad on 25th December 1927 a public meeting has been organised on 30th Oct. 1927 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar. All are requested to attend.

Shivatarkar



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I mounted on the chariot with bow in my hands and it is my satisfaction that bravery has surcharged my body. To establish fame in the world, to enhance the prestige of one's own religion and to release the earth from its burden, now Parth be doubtless, pay attention to this struggle. After hearing this there should be no need of saying anything more.

Year 1st] Friday 4th November, 1927. [Issue 14, 15, 16

Day-to-day Problems

1. Hypocrisy of the Hindu Maha Sabha has been brought to the notice of the people by us many times. The gang of Hindu Maha Sabha would like to bring about Hindu unity by preserving the Varna system as it is. It is really surprising that they are not understanding the futility of their exercise. It is still far more surprising that those foolish men who have embraced other religions but now would like to return to Hinduism are failing to understand the incompetence of those Hindu Maha Sabhaites. Those that have returned back to Hinduism by falling prey to the propaganda of the Hindu Maha Sabha members their plight can be seen in two examples of such reconverts. Shri Nayadu before he converted to the Christianity was a touchable Hindu. Thinking that his relations and others in Hinduism will accept him as their man he returned back to hindu fold. But to his surprise none accepted him as their man. Tired of his humiliating position in Hinduism he returned back to Christianity. Another example is of Shri Vishwas who was an untouchable before his conversion to Christianity but now by becoming a victim of false propaganda

of Hindu Maha Sabha he has come back to Hinduism and has become an untouchable. We hope that the wisdom will dawn on him and he will go back to Christianity. We hope that those untouchables who have left Hinduism should learn a lesson from the example of Shri Vishwas. We will be happy if this happens.

2. In Madhya Pradesh and Rajputana there is an untouchable caste by name 'Meghwal'. Till to date this untouchable caste used to use only the ornaments made by brass. Now some members from the well to do families of this caste are feeling shy of using brass made ornaments. Some of them now have started using the silver ornaments. This change among some untouchables seems to have infuriated the touchables. They say that this is an insult to them. They also argue that the untouchables have become arrogant. The touchables, therefore, have started harassing them. In Khandesh also the same thing is being repeated. Here also the touchables have started harassing the untouchables. The reason is that some of them have started wearing clean clothes they have given up their old dirty habits and are leading a clean life. The Indian Penal Code must invade this ill-treatment of the untouchables by the caste Hindus

3. How to get rid of this tyrannical treatment for no offence of any kind is a problem before the untouchables. We do not think that we will get any help from the government to free ourselves from this tyranny. Eventhough the government does not belong to the Hindus its behaviour is as per the policy of the Hindus. Had it not been so they would not have beaten Shri Athavale merely because he helps the untouchables in their awakening. If the touchable Hindus do not allow the untouchables to lead a happy life of their choice it is better that they should change their religion. The touchable Hindus do not allow the untouchables to lead a life enjoying equal rights with them because they regard the untouchables as lower beings. Unless the untouchables improve their status the touchables will not regard them as their equals and their status will not be improved unless they leave Hinduism. What else can we advise the untouchables except asking them to change their religion.

4. Hindu Maha Sabha is interested in bringing the Hindus converted to other religion back to Hinduism to increase the strength of the Hindus. But it is not interested in making the Hindus the people of one Varna. Those who have converted to Christianity or Islam leaving Hinduism are mostly the low caste people from the Hindus. They left Hinduism because they were in low Varna and embraced Christianity or Islam because these are the religions of one Varna. The members of the Hindu Maha Sabha because of their firm faith in Varna system are failing to understand this tangle as it exists.

5. When we see the recent behaviour and functioning of the school committee of Mumbai Corporation we surprise, why somebody from the corporation has not brought the censuring proposal against the school committee. It seems that the school committee has decided to set aside almost all the resolutions passed by the Mumbai Corporation. The high-handedness of this school committee is sometimes discussed in the corporation and nothing beyond that.

6. It is well known that the brahmanised people make efforts to protect Brahmanism whenever there is an opportunity. But nobody thought that the government also helps them in their efforts. The Editor of the newspaper 'Rashtraveer' of Belgaum used the expression that "Brahmanism must be killed" the District Magistrate at Belgaum warned the Editor by issuing notice that he should not use such expression again. The word Brahmanism is like imperialism, socialism, Bolshevism, capitalism etc. and it relates to the doctrinal aspect of the social system. And in any country the man is free to discuss about which doctrine of social system is good and which is bad and this is what we believe. Perhaps the Magistrate seems to have taken the word Brahmanism to mean the Brahmins. Otherwise he would not pass the strange order like this. If his intention was to stop the discussion on cult or sect then he would have issued the order to the Editor of paper Parikshak (examiner) of Belgaum against his writing that "Satyashodhaks* should be killed". But this

* Satyashdhaks were the followers of Satya Shodhak (Truth Finding) Samaj founded by Mahatma Phule in 1873.

has not happened. And our understanding is correct. The Editor of Rashtraveer a Marathi newspaper of the workers of Satya Shodhak Samaj from Belgaum should find out what is reality and he should be rest assured that those who believe in the destruction of Brahmanism will definitely support him.

Exchange of Views

Untouchables in Villages and Their Oppression By Village Ruffians

(Writer - A harassed man)

If we observe the population of the Hindus minutely we will see that it is being reduced centuries after centuries, years after years and day by day. There may be other reasons for its reduction constantly but among all the reasons the tenacity of the Muslims is the powerful cause of it. The man like Shraddhanand sacrificed his life to stop this exodus from Hindus and to add strength to it. Swamiji's death inspired many. The unity of the Hindus and bringing the converted Hindus back to Hinduism these two movements gathered strength. But these two movements remained confined to the cities and did not spread to the villages. Villagers are mostly illiterate, ignorant and poor. The Shuddhi and Sanghatan these two movements have not spread to the villages and hence exodus to other religions is largely from the villages. In villages the untouchables are in big number among the converts and they opt for Islam in big way and rarely their choice fell on Christianity. The reason for their embracing Islam is quite understandable.

The touchable Hindus by keeping the untouchables under their slavery have completely destroyed their hope of all-round progress. The sprout of their worldly progress has been uprooted in its beginning only. In spite of their inhuman oppression and suffering in grinding poverty the untouchables have still stuck to the Hindu religion. But now their attitude has changed, they are being drawn closer to the Islamic religion. It is the caste Hindus in the villages who are

particularly responsible for this change of attitude among the untouchables. Among the untouchables the Mahars are the worst sufferers under their age old Baluta system. This system has made them slaves of the caste Hindus with no escape from it. It is they who are leaving Hinduism in a big way. It is a pity that the Hindu leaders who are interested in strengthening Hinduism are not paying their attention to it. The Mahars are leading the life under the tyranny of village Patil and Kulkarni. If they appeal to the government there also the officers like Collectors listen to their subordinate officials who are mostly high caste Hindus. Tired of this enduring they think of taking revenge on Hindus and this has naturally driven them to Islam.

Absence of Nationalism Among the Indians

The feelings of nationalism is not known to Indians nor do they know its need for the country. The reason for this is that the Indians never experienced the growth of nationalist feelings in them. During ancient days there were many small states and hence none can say that there was a growth of nationalism in India. There were individuals born with national qualities but they were regarded as extraordinary men. The ancient states disappeared merely because of the absence of national feelings and national qualities. This is the history of India. This quality was predominantly absent in the ruling houses themselves and it is because of this the man like Ram took more interest in the forest than in the ruling house. Kauravas and Pandavas fought the war, the kingdom of Ravan dashed to the ground. By seeing the different religions and different castes what must be the feeling of almighty God is not known.

In this country the Indian National Congress is meeting for the last 40 years annually in its conferences discussing the National problems even then the untouchables have to resort to Satyagraha at Mahad for the sake of water which is the product of God. Is it a sign of nationalism? At Amravati the untouchables had to resort to Satyagraha for temple entry is it the sign that the people of Amravati have developed the feelings of nationalism in them? At Vaikom the untouchables

struggled for two years through Satyagraha to establish their right to use the road which was prohibited to them by the caste Hindus. It is the sign of what? The nation which is not prepared to touch the seven crores of people why should it make uproars for its own freedom? Every year the Indian National Congress meets for its annual conference by spending people's money in lakhs. If we see the resolutions passed by it we will find the lack of the feelings of nationalism and the balanced thinking on the problem. Had these problems found in their resolutions then where was the need of the movements like Brahmin-non-Brahmin, touchables and untouchables, Moderates and Extremists? It is naturally the sign that the people do not believe in Congress. Untouchability and severe caste system often come in the way of national interests and the Congress has not succeeded even to reduce the intensity in these two in its forty years of existence. Then how can anybody say that the Congress is charged with the feelings of nationalism? The nation where there are 5000 castes among its human beings, where one fourth of the people are not considered as human beings, where high and low is based on birth, where man's worth is not based on his qualities but on his caste there where is the scope for the growth of the feelings of nationalism? The nation is burning with the caste differences and caste hatred and nobody thinks of destroying these very seriously. How can then there will grow a sense of nationalism among the people?

Under the circumstance is not the demand for Swarajya by a handful of men the god-fearing? Equality and unity are the two essentials for national progress and in the absence of these two the nation is finding it difficult to produce the feeling of nationalism among its people. Instead of finding out the causes of inequality and disunity and trying to removing the same the leaders are hypocritically concentrating on the problems which are their fruitless exercises. Therefore, those leaders who have made patriotism their creed must make efforts to destroy the artificially created caste system and the social inequality. Without this the creating the feeling of nationalism in the country is just an impossibility.

The Need Of Schools In Villages

(By Krishna Nayaku Sutar)

Kalambi

Country's progress or decline depends upon the merit and demerit of its people. The countries like England, Germany, America, Japan etc have reached the height of their progress because along with men women are also equally educated there. There is no pleasant shadow like the mother, there is no producer of energy like the mother and there is no lovable thing like the mother. In ancient days our people used to honour the mother like anything. Therefore, India in ancient days had reached the high watermark of its progress. In our Aryavarta during ancient days there lived the famous learned women like Gargy, Anusuya, Sita, Savitri, Damayanti etc. some poems in Rigveda were composed by the women. India started declining from that day when the people began thinking that educating women was irreligious. In today's India if we throw our glance at the non-Brahmin women and particularly the untouchable women we find only the thick darkness in matters of education among them. For lack of education on their part they are not that wise in the functioning of their day to day life. For smooth running of the cart both the wheels of the cart must be in proper order. Similarly for the smooth functioning of life both man and woman must be wise enough then only the cart of life can go on well. This will happen only when both men and women receive education.

In cities at least seeing the example of others the non-Brahmins send their daughters to the schools. In villages the situation is quite contrary. In villages people are illiterate. Eventhough there are some literate people they too are not willing to send their daughters to the school. When asked why do they not send their daughters to the schools the answer in the villages is that the social environment is opposed to the co-education. Therefore, it is necessary that the school mainly for the girls is the need to prepare the villagers mind for women education.

Now in the changed condition the education department is in the hands of the peoples' representatives. Fortunately the education department is with the Non-Brahmins. Majority of school Boards are in the hands of the Non-Brahmins. There is a need of opening girl schools in the villages. If this does not happen the Non-Brahmin and untouchable girls will remain illiterate and crippled in life.

Correspondence

Hypocrisy of Reconversion

To the Editor of Bahishkrit Bharat

Recently a man from Christianity persuaded to come back and he came back to Hinduism in July and he was named as Sadasivarao Naidu and he has gone again back to Christianity and become Samuel Naidu on 9-10-27. We were thick friends even before he came back to Hinduism. His expectation was that he will be treated well by all in Hinduism irrespective of his caste. But this did not happen. Even his own caste men remained away from him. Since he had left Christianity the Christian friends also kept themselves away from him.

This way the Hindu Maha Sabha came out in its true colour. So long as 7 crores of untouchables are there and caste system is there the reconversion to Hinduism is not possible and those who do it are bound to suffer as Naidu suffered and went back to Christianity. Hindus will always find it difficult to compete with Christians and Muslims because of this dilemma in their religion.

Yours,

Pandurang Nathuji Rajbhoj

211 Ghorpade Peth, Pune

The Reconversion Programme And The Duty of the Non-Brahmins

To the Editor Bahishkrit Bharat,

Hope this will find place in your paper.

In Dharmapeth at Nagpur, a demonstrator of Agricultural

College Shri N.K.Vishwas was reconverted to Hinduism in the temple of Maruti on 19-10-27. On this occasion Dr. Munje spoke on the eradication of untouchability. Shri Vishwas was an Indian Christian and that he was a man from the Mahar caste. When he came back to Hinduism he again became a Mahar. Now whether he and other Mahars are free to come into the temple or not? This was a question put to Dr. Munje by some Mahars. Munje told them that there is no prohibition. After this some Mahars with coconuts went to the temple. There also nobody objected to them. they placed the coconuts in front of the deity and bowed before the deity. Next day again some people with worshipping material with them started going into the temple. It is here some Non-Brahmins objected to it and prevented them. The worshipping material was snatched from them and was thrown away. There were signs of growing the quarrel, police were informed, they came and calmed the situation. Had the police not reached in time the beating and banging would have taken place and there would have been bloodshed. Among the untouchables the Mahars are becoming more conscious and awakened, keeping them suppressed as was in the olden days is not possible now. And the Non-Brahmins should remember it. The leaders of the Non-Brahmins should take precaution in educating the village level Non-Brahmins in matters of untouchability.

As Brahmins are prepared for the eradication of the untouchability the Non-Brahmins are not prepared for that because of their rustic background.

Yours Sincerely,

Dharmdas maruti Nagarare

Imam Wada Peth Nagpur

Date : 27-10-1927

Untouchables You Should Awake

Author: D.R. Raravikar, Akola

The Satyagraha that the untouchables intend to do for the entry of the temple of Ambabai at Amravati is being opposed

by the caste Hindus from all the directions. The leaders who give sermons against the untouchability in normal times also when the crucial period comes either keep quiet or even support those people indirectly who oppose the cause of the untouchables. Sometimes we doubt that they side the cause of the untouchables with a view that they need the support of the untouchables against the Muslims. Had it not been so the leaders who used to say that unless the untouchability is removed India cannot progress the same leaders could not have advised the untouchables that they should wait until the appropriate time comes. These leaders do not make any efforts to prepare public opinion favourable to the cause of the untouchables. instead what they have in their mind, that they sell in the name of the peoples' opinion. By saying that the public opinion is not ready they are disturbing the opinion of those who are somewhat favourable to the cause of the untouchables. It is the low mentality of the leaders who are waiting for proper time to go against the untouchability. This is the view of the leaders of the Shuddhi movement and by this kind of thinking they are practising fraud on the people of this country. This is a mockery of the words Shuddhi(purification) and Sanghathan(unity). So long as Hindus are not owning the untouchables who are by blood and flesh Hindus and their mere touch pollutes them then what is the use of making efforts to purify those who have left Hinduism because of its practice of tyranny on them.

Therefore, our request to our untouchable brothers is that urging , entreating, appealing etc. are not the remedies on our ills. If these are your weapons in your emancipating struggle, even God cannot help you.

'God Helps A Brave Man'

Remember this saying and rise up. We should remember that we are also human beings. This deep sleep is enough now. Remember this if not for your individual sake at least for the sake of the nation. You have to rise up to face the calamity. Among the fighters for the cause of our motherhood you should be first in the rank. Brothers if you do not rouse your

sense of self-respect neither you will advance in progress nor your motherland will forge ahead in its progress.

Untouchables Will Embrace Other Religion

To Shri Dattatray Ramchandra Raravikar, Akola the regards from V.V.Athavale, social worker, Untouchable Society, Dahidanda. Last time I had sent an application that the Mahars of Lasur, Taluka Daryapur have decided to convert to Christianity. The matter has not been enquired yet. The Mahars from Lasur have written to me that the touchable Hindus have decided to harass the Mahars. Their argument is that the Mahars are living a clean life. I have written to you because you are always sympathetic to us. I therefore, request you to please see that the trouble from the caste Hindus, at Lasur is stopped. If something is not done immediately and if the Mahars of Lasur embrace some other religion I should not be blamed for that. I have also gone through such trouble. On the day of Pola (a cattle festival) festival police sub-inspector Dhokya beat me in confinement and came in the way of improvement of untouchables. This is an injury to the reform movement of the untouchables that is going on at Dahidanda. In the issue of 'Prajapaksa'. (Peoples Party) I wrote an article under the title 'Whether Justice Can Be done' on 21-8-27. It is because of this writing inspector 'Dhoka' called me to the police station and beat me severely. Then I wrote an article 'Whether Mughal Rule or English Rule' and sent it to the same paper but it has not been yet published. I came to know that you are going to Mumbai, therefore, I have written this to you. Meet our powerful leader Dr. Ambedkar and report this episode to him and request him to please make me the subscriber to the paper 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. I hope Dr. Ambedkar will definitely take care of us. You always pay attention to our welfare and you fearlessly help us in our difficulties. I pray Almighty God that this kind of Mahatmas must take birth in our Hindu religion.

Yours,

Baliram Bhivasan Athavale
Mahar Social Worker a Hindu
Dahidanda

Take Us In Muslim Religion

Respected Amajat Mia Jahagirdar Saheb, Balapur. Sir, you are a person well informed in the tenets of Islam religion. I used to shout till today that I am a Hindu, Hindu and Hindu. But it is not true. In Hindu religion a foolish idea of high and low is in practice. Therefore, I do not know to which religion I belong. If I feel that I am Hindu in Hindu religion we are regarded as less than animals. In recent days some people are returning to Hinduism from Muslim religion. In Islamic people there is very little social awakening, therefore, some are returning to Hindu religion. Therefore, the efforts must be made to induce the untouchables to embrace Islam to relieve them from their plight in Hinduism. Therefore, I request you to please communicate

your opinion on this date, 4-8-1927

Yours,

Suryabhan Bhivasan Mahar

Dahihanda, Tal. Akot

E.B.B. both these letters have been
sent to us by Raravikar for
publication

Hindu Leaders Must Pay Attention

(From a news reporter)

At Lasur, Taluka Daryapur (Varhad) here the Mahars have given up eating the carrion etc. and have started leading a clean life like upper caste Hindus, even then the caste Hindus instead of reducing their harassment have increased it against the untouchables. The tired of the harassment the untouchables are preparing to embrace Christianity. Will Hindus pay their attention in time?

An arrogant Mamledar(Tahsildar)

On 28-9-27 respected Mamledar had come to Goregaon for his visit. I had to stand before him for some reason. Whatever I wanted to speak I spoke. After completing his

government work Mamledar Saheb said Ye Dheds when are you going to pollute the water tank? On this a Mahar said we will do that as soon as you order. If by listening Ambedkar Saheb you pollute the tank then I will order for

firing. Will our merciful English government reprimand the concerned officer to abstain from such behaviour with untouchables.

A Mahar belonging to
Goregaon

**Textbooks and The Teaching of
The Untouchability
By C.S.Kate, Dist. Solapur**

How bitter are the tongues, eyes and thinking of touchables about the untouchables is difficult to say.

In 3rd standard text book lesson no. 46 deals with the village professionals. In this lesson names like Kusha Dhor, Parsha Chambhar, are mentioned. It indicates the contempt for the caste of those persons. Similarly in second standard text book lesson no. 40 deals with village workers. Here the village watchman has been named as Bhagya contemptuously. If the caste Hindus are mentioned this way with contempt what would have they thought? We feel equally pinch for this.

We request that either these two lessons mentioned above must be removed from the books or the necessary corrections should be made in them. will our merciful government pay attention to it?

Suggestions To Subscribers

While sending money orders or letters it should be addressed to the manager Bahishkrit Bharat. Your registered number must be mentioned. The letter will not be replied if the ticket worth one anna is not sent. The subscription should not be paid without getting the receipt.

BAHISHKRIT BHARAT

(Untouchable India)

Friday, 4th November, 1927

The law of Mahar Vatan and the explanation of amendments suggested therein.

In the last three issues we have written three main articles on the theme Mahars and their Vatan. There it has been stated that how Mahars suffer from their Vatan and there should be some reform in their Vatan system. We had also requested that those who would like to make additional suggestions should do so by writing to us. While we were waiting for the suggestions suddenly there took place two meetings in Mumbai and the resolutions were passed against the suggestions made by us. It was surprising that instead of making the suggestions they passed the resolutions opposing the reforms suggested by us. When we made detailed enquiry about it we came to know that the meeting was called by our own opponents. Then we came to know that it is quite natural that they should pass the resolution opposing our plan.

Abolish The Vatan Of Mahars. Their Land Removing From Inam Section Be Included In Rayatava Section And The Mahars Be Freed From Their Work That They Do Under Their Vatan.

This is what we have explained in our plan. But some people are mispropagating about it. Their propaganda is that we are suggesting that the Mahars should be forcibly freed from the Vatan. In fact the discussion on this subject has already been winded up last time. But we are explaining the issue again to remove the misunderstanding that is being spread by the opponents of our plan.

There Are Six Purposes Behind

The Correction That We Have Suggested

- (1) First purpose is that, the Mahars whose lands are under somebody's possession should be returned to them since it is the source of their livelihood.
- (2) The Baluta that which the Mahars get from the Rayat and it entirely depends on the will of the Rayat. The work that the Mahars do for the government and for the Rayats for that they get Baluta from the Rayats. But the position of the Mahars is if the Rayat gives the Baluta take it and if he does not, go without it. What we have suggested is that the giving Baluta should be compulsory for the Rayats. This should be the right of Mahars.
- (3) When the burden of the work increases or cost of things goes up then increase in the pay is followed everywhere. But the emolument in the form of Baluta has been fixed once and for all and there is no change in it even when the burden of the work has increased and the dearness has gone up. We have suggested rise in their Baluta when such a situation arises. This is our third point.
- (4) In some places the Mahars are ready to do the government work and are unwilling to do the work of the Rayats. But the work of the government and the Rayats are tied together. Therefore, the Mahar has to do both the works compulsorily instead of this if he is unwilling to do the work of the Rayat he should be relieved from that. this is our fourth suggestion.
- (5) As some Mahars are tired of the work of the Rayats similarly some Mahars are also tired of the work of the government. Such Mahars can resign from the government work and such Mahars should have this freedom is our fifth suggestion.
- (6) Everywhere the complaint of the Mahars is that their work is not fixed. They are asked to do any work and they have to do it. To end this injustice the work that the Mahars have to do should be fixed. In order to give concrete shape to all those issues we have suggested the following reforms in the existing law of the Vatan.

- 1) In order to meet the purpose of our first suggestion we have added a new Para to the existing 9th Para. The Para is this: recently the lands of the Mahars that are in the possession of the other farmers the authority of returning those lands to the original owner be given to the Collectors. The Collectors rarely use this power given to them. and even if the Collector does something he instead of transferring the land to the original owner the provision of paying him some rent is made. Therefore, the poverty of Vatandars continue. Hence, in our plan the suggestion has been made that the transferring the land to the original owner should be made compulsory for the Collector.
- 2) In order to do the work of collecting the emoluments of Baluta smoothly we have suggested the addition of two articles to the original article no.19. According to these two added articles the Mahars have been given the rights of converting their Baluta payment into coins (currency) and get it. This will give a concrete form to their Baluta emoluments that they receive from the Rayats. The Rayat will also know what payment he has to make to the Mahars. At present the Mahars have to wander from farm to farm of the Rayats at the time of harvest and collect the corn that the Rayat wishes to give. Nothing is fixed here. In our plan we have tried to remove this uncertainty. Instead the Mahars will receive their payment from the government treasury from time to time.
- 3) By suggesting the changes in the article 21 a provision has been suggested that after every ten years there should be the revision in their payment. Their pay hike may be affected and Mahars should have the right to ask for the increase in their pay.
- 4) According to our plan the Mahars have been given the right of getting their payment fixed from the Collector as to how much is the share of Baluta that they should get from the Rayats and how much from the government. Once this division is specified it will be easier for any Mahar to free himself from the work of the Rayat if he

does not want to do that.

- 5) Those Mahars who do not want to do even the government service, can also get complete freedom from both the works the government work as well as the work of the Rayats. For this we suggested the amendment to Vatan law article no. 15. Usually the Mahars are worried that if they give up doing their Vatan work they will lose their Vatan lands also. If our plan is executed they need not lose their land. Only thing is that they should pay the land tax as Rayats do.
- 6) The work of the Mahars must be fixed is our 6th plan proposal. There should be rules regarding their work. But these rules should not be implemented without the consent of the Legislative Council. According to our plan the work plan prepared by the government can be examined by the Legislative Council regarding what is legal and what is illegal in the work to be assigned to the Mahars.

Hitherto we have discussed the problems connected with Vatan and the plan to reform the Vatan system. On this some people are misguiding the Mahars that their Vatan will be abolished. Therefore, we think that it is necessary to explain this issue more in detail. In our opinion the Mahar Vatan is such a dangerous thing that it is better that it should be abolished as early as possible. We will not feel bad even if some pressure is used to separate Mahars from their Vatan. In order to remove the ignorance of the people the government makes the education compulsory then in order to end the slavery of the Mahars why not abolish the Vatani system compulsorily. It is true that the Mahars will not agree with the idea that their Vatan should be abolished compulsorily. But those who are wise people will not wait for the consent of everybody for doing a good work. Shri Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur was not an enemy of the Mahars. Such a saviour of untouchables was never born in the past and perhaps will not be there in the future. He had very correctly understood that the Mahars remained the degraded human beings only because of their Vatan. Therefore, by using his power he compulsorily

abolished the Vatan of the Mahars. When the Maharaja abolished their Vatan it does not mean that the Mahars did not oppose him. Wherever it is the people of old generations there they blindly follow the old ideas, giving up whatever gain one has in his hands, and chasing for the better gain that runs ahead is a courageous gain that one does not generally dare to pursue. While men in America had detained the Negroes as their slaves for days together though the Negroes were also human beings. They were sold out like the animals in the market. Some people felt that this is a sinful act. In America there took place a war among the white people on the issue of abolition of the slavery of the Negroes. In the war the people who felt that the slavery must continue were defeated. On 22nd September 1862 Abraham Lincoln, then the President of America, issued a declaration that the slavery of the Negroes has been abolished from 1st, January 1863. When this declaration was made the owners of the slaves collected them together and told them that "You are now a free people now you will not get your breakfast and meals from here. When they heard this they instead of becoming happy became angry with Abraham Lincoln. This is what had happened to the Mahars of Kolhapur in the beginning. However the results of the good work do not remain hidden for a long time. Soon the Mahars of Kolhapur realised that the abolition of their Vatan is for their good. They voluntarily applied to the government stating that their Vatan should be abolished. Now in America if anybody tells the Negroes that we will give you breakfast, we will give you your meals be our slaves, the Negroes will refuse to do that similarly in Kolhapur if the Mahars are told that they should take their Vatan back, they will say we do not want that, this is so because once the insect is brought out of the hell it will feel something initially but after some days if it is asked to go back the insect will say no. the Mahars of Kolhapur are now in free atmosphere breathing the fresh air. Not only this but the example of Kolhapur Mahars is inspiring the Mahars in other area. The Mahars of Kagal state have written to us for mediation in abolishing their Vatan also.

Though it is our opinion that the Vatan should be abolished

by law compulsorily, yet we have suggested only the reform in the existing Vatan system and in the end we have left it to the Mahars to accept what they wish to accept.

On the basis of the movement that is going on at present among the Mahars there are three groups of Mahars in their opinion or view point.

There are some Mahars who think that there is nothing wrong in the existing system of Vatan.

The other category is of those who think that there is nothing wrong in the continuation of Vatan but it needs to be reformed.

In addition to this there is a third division of Mahars who are tired of the burden of Vatan system. In their view this system should be at once abolished provided that their Vatan lands are retained to them. The plan of reform that we have prepared cover all these three classes of Mahars. The Mahars who think that the Vatan system is good we have suggested no compulsion for such people to give up their Vatan. They should live with their Vatan happily. The Mahars who think that the existing Vatan system should be reformed for them our suggestion is that they should apply to the Collector and get their salaries fixed in currency. Those who do not want to do the work of the Rayats they should apply to the Collector and get relieved from the work of the Rayats. But all this has been left to the will of the Mahars. The Mahars who do not want to stick to the Vatan at all the alternative for them is that they should pay the land tax and get relieved from the Vatan. The people who are opposing such plan must be either foolish or cruel. Satisfying such people is a difficult task. The explanation that has been given here is not to satisfy the cruel people but to make the foolish people wise so that they will not fall prey to the cruel people. We hope our objective will be fulfilled and we hope that the Mahars will definitely get rid of their Vatan which is the source of their age-old slavery.

To His Highness Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Karveer.

His Highness' obedient servants, Vatan holding Mahars at Bastawad Petha Rayabag, Karveer State beg to state the following few lines.

We the Mahars have been branded as untouchables by the bad practices in Hindu society and by stamping on us as out-caste Hindus have driven us out of the village to stay in a segregated locality. Therefore, we have suffered all kinds' of miseries. In other society the people are growing in knowledge and culture. Their progress is going on constantly but we the so called untouchables have remained away from all progress and all kinds of happiness. We have reached the lowest ebb of life.

In order to bring us on the path of the progres Shri Chhatrapati is making all kinds of efforts. He has established hostels for our school going boys, he has thrown the schools open for the untouchable students he has absorbed many untouchables in the state services, he has given Sanads to many educated untouchable for practising legal profession and setting aside the distinction of touchable-untouchable he treat the untouchables as his children and brothers. Therefore, the untouchables regard the Chhatrapati as their God and will continue to express their gratitude for generations to come.

But inspite of all this when we throw our glance on the population of our people we feel very much disappointed. The changes that have occurred are nothing considering their precarious condition.

In Hindu society the people love their Vatan very much. But the Vatan and the Vatani services are such that there is nothing that Vatan holders should feel proud of it. But this Vatan which has come to us hereditarily we love it as the insects do in hell and stay there. In order to free us from this worthless Vatan the Chhatrapati issued an ordinance and decided that after every ten acres of land one Mahar should be absorbed in government service and rest of the Mahars should be removed from the government services. But by this order the expected

purpose was not served. Because by this order many Mahars will lose their lands and hence those who lose their land will be sourceless. Another thing is that those who remain in service will have to shoulder the burden of the Vatan. So long as the Vatan remains with Mahars their progress is an impossibility. Therefore, it is our considered opinion that these Vatan services must be abolished and the Mahars should be freed from their Vatan.

Therefore, our humble request to the government is as follows:

The Mahars should be allowed to retain their lands and these lands should be converted to Rayatava lands and these lands should be brought under the Rayata land making them taxable as is the case of the lands of the Rayats. And the Mahars should be freed from the services that they render under the Vatan system. They should be completely freed from both the government services and the services of the Rayats.

This step will free the Mahars to some extent. By doing some other services and professions they will earn for their livelihood. In this move of setting the Mahars free from the bondage of their Vatan it does no harm to anybody nor does it make anybody unhappy. Our Vatan workers were doing the work of forced labour for the villagers; providing the wood by breaking it into pieces to the villagers; carrying the dead bodies of animals away from the villages; and doing the dirty work of the village. These works are forced on us due to the Vatan. So long as we continue to do these works we are bound to be condemned. The freedom from Vatan will give us the freedom of profession. This will free us to take up any job of our liking and this will also remove the stamp of untouchability pressed on us gradually.

The government can employ any number of servants from the amount it will receive from the lands of the Mahars after their land is made taxable by bringing it under Rayatava system.

It is therefore, our humble request to the government that it should bring our lands under Rayatava system by removing

the same from the Inami (Vatani) system of land and all Mahars should be freed from their Vatan services.

Date : 27-7-1921

Signed by Mahars

**His Highness order no. 163
Order issued to the
Secretary this way**

The Mahars have voluntarily applied that their Inami land (Vatani land) be brought under Rayatwari system by abolishing the Inami system of the land and His Highness accepts this at once. For liberating Mahars from their slavery this proposal of the Mahars is excellent. Therefore, by removing their lands from Inami system these land be transferred to Rayatwari system. If there is anything on these lands that is all nullified by this order. By this order all rights associated with Rayatwari land are being given to the Mahars. Nobody can extract any work from them. This order should not remain in pending in any office for more than three days. The Mamledars should report immediately about the action taken by him. The lands will remain with those who possess it now. The possession should not be changed under any circumstances.

Rajput

Signature

Date : 5-8-1921

Shahu Chhatrapati

To The Secretary

The Order Passed is

Thus

Those Mahars who have applied for converting their Inami land into Rayatwari land from them no work should be extracted from the date of their application. All the work that they used to do must be waived. Those who extract work from them by force will be relieved from the services without giving pension. If such people are Vatan holders they will be freed

from that also. This should be informed to all the village officers and workers.

This should be known to all.

Shirol

Shahu Chhatrapati

Date : 5-8-1921

In the beginning when the Mahars resigned from their Vatan work even then the villagers, village workers and government servants and officers used to extract forcibly the work from the Mahars. Hence this new order was made necessary to be issued by the Chhatrapati and the arrangement was made to send the copies of this letter to all the Mahars.

B.N.Shinge

Self-Introduction

Public Meetings And Other News Kagwad

At Kagwad, Taluka Athani, Dist. Belgaum, here a public meeting of untouchables was held on 29-9-27. Shri Rama Bhoma Mang, a pension holding school teacher presided over the meeting. About 500 people from Mahar, Mang, Chambhar and Dhor communities had gathered. The President of the meeting in his introductory speech said that we are making some progress now a days only due our compassionate British government. In ancient time the Brahmanised Hindus harassed us like anything. In order to keep us divided they sowed the seeds of high and low amongst us. Even now some brahmanised people keeping some untouchables under their thumb impression are making use of some untouchables to do mud-throwing on Dr. Ambedkar who is the intellectual star on the new horizon. They are trying to mar his movement of our liberation at the instigation of some touchable leaders. Shri Sakat and Shri Vyayadande of Puna of Mang caste are unnecessarily criticising Dr. Ambedkar and we feel very unhappy over this. Doing this would mean the throwing our own axe on our legs with our own hands. By giving up of this kind of doing our people must try to regain their lost rights is

my request to the untouchable communities of Karnatak.

After this the following resolutions were passed.

- (1) Expressing loyalty to the government.
- (2) Untouchables should launch their movement of liberation under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar.
- (3) A resolution of congratulating Shri Dharmaji Raghvendra Khale for his acquittal In the court case.
- (4) Rendering help for the Satyagraha to be launched at Mahad from 25-12-27.
- (5) Using the right of entering the public places like temples, water tanks, public wells etc.
- (6) Congratulating Shri Ingle for his good work in Karnatak area.

On these resolutions some speakers made their speeches and then ended the meeting.

Untouchable Students' Gathering

Pune

The untouchable students' annual social gathering was organised at Pune recently on 2-10-27 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ambedkar, the leader of the depressed classes. The gathering continued for two days, Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday some games were arranged in which the students of Mahar, Mang and Chambhar castes had participated. The prize distribution programme was kept next day. When Dr. Ambedkar arrived the slogans in praise of him were given. After group photo with Dr. Ambedkar the prize distribution programme was conducted. Among the guests that were present were Dr. Solanki, Principal Tawade, Shridharpant Tilak, Shri Sangamnerkar, Shri Kadam, Shri Aidale, Shri Barath, Shri Bhandare, Shri Rajbhoj, Shri Landage, Shri Vayadande, Shri Patade of D.C.Mission, Subhedar Ghatage, Shri Gayakwad and Adult Education students from Sevasadan and trainees from the Training College. When the prize distribution was over the President Dr. Ambedkar made his speech. In his

speech he graphically explained the miserable condition in which the untouchables live and added further that the future of untouchables will depend upon the seriousness of the students in doing their duty. He also advised the women that they should also help the process of progress of society by taking care of their character and responsibility. He explained how even educated men suffer due to the stigma of untouchability very seriously by giving examples. After listening him the public became very serious in their mood. Dr. Saheb was explaining the problem from the bottom of his heart and his urge for the good of the people is expressing in his every word. His speech made everybody serious in provoking for thinking and doing something. This event became memorial due to his speech in the life of many who attended the meeting.

Mumbai

On the ground near Clark Road Mumbai, public meeting of the Bombay workers on behalf of the Mahar Social Workers organisation was held on 25-10-27 at 4 o'clock in the evening. In the meeting following resolutions were passed:

- (1) A request was made to the untouchables for enrolling their names to participate the Mahad Satyagraha and to help the Satyagraha financially.
- (2) At present the unemployment has grown in Mumbai and the condition of the untouchables has become precarious hence the request was made to the government that it should reduce the rent of the untouchable workers chawls(houses) in Mumbai.

The people collected Rs. 48/- in the meeting and gave it to the Mahad Satyagraha Fund. One old man Shri Govind Ramaji Adarekar announced his name for participating the Mahad Satyagraha and prayed to the God that he should bless him with death while doing that holy work. Shri Shivatarkar thanked the old man and the donors who donated money for the Satyagraha.

Vandre

On 23-10-27 a public meeting was organised in Saint Martin Club by Mahar social workers Union under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ambedkar. Two resolutions were passed (1) all should help the Satyagraha movement at Mahad and (2) congratulating the Mangu Mahars who by their temple entry established their equal right with the caste Hindus.

Dr. Ambedkar in his presidential address stated that the untouchables are the people of great qualities. We are launching Satyagraha not for the purpose of the selfishness of the untouchables but it is for the good of entire Hindu civilization. Hence it is the duty of every one to participate in the Satyagraha. He also explained how the brahmanised high caste men are the people of rotten minds and how the untouchables are the large hearted men. This speech appealed even the Brahmins who attended the meeting. Then the organisers of the meeting donated Rs. 50/- for Mahad Satyagraha. Shri Shivatarkar thanked the organisers and then ended the meeting.

From Our Correspondent

Important Meeting

The original residents of Shrivardhan area but now staying in Mumbai the Somavamshiya Mahars came together for a meeting on 16-10-27. Shri Dharmaji Pandurang Bhostekar presided over the meeting. How important it is to participate the movement that is going on for the welfare of the untouchables was the basic idea very systematically explained in the meeting by Shri Mandlekar alias Chahawala , Shri Walvatkar, Shri Marlekar and Shri Jadhav. Ten young men immediately readied themselves to participate the Satyagraha at Mahad and they requested the Chairman of the meeting to register their names. The meeting ended by shouting the slogan in the name of Dr. Ambedkar.

Pre-Preparations for Mahad Satyagraha

(Goregaon)

On Sunday dated 16-10-27 there took place a huge public meeting in the Maharwada(Mahar locality) at Goregaon, Taluka Managaon, Dist. Kolaba. Shri Dhondi Vithaldasswami Rajankar presided over the meeting. The people from 50 villages had gathered there and the following resolutions were passed in the meeting.

- (1) This meeting endorses its support to the Mahad Satyagraha whole-heartedly.
- (2) This meeting requests all the villagers to support the Mahad Satyagraha financially.
- (3) This meeting appeals all the untouchables to participate the Mahad Satyagraha.
- (4) On behalf of the Goregaon Conference the committee of following persons be appointed to help the Satyagraha endeavour at Mahad.

A committee of eight members including its Chairman and its secretary was appointed. Some members made their speeches on the resolutions that are mentioned above.

In pursuance of the resolution no. 2 many people in the meeting came forward and donated both in kind and in coin. Among the donors there were not only men but also there were women and even the students.

In all the people donated 2 Khandi rice (one Khandi =20 mounds) and Rs. 123 and annas 4. The Chairman of Satyagraha committee Shri Shivatarkar thanked them profusely.

The people from all over the places in Bombay Presidency, particularly from Marathi speaking area registered their names for joining the Satyagraha at Mahad. The majority among them were Mahars. They also rendered financial help to it.

A Huge Public Meeting For The Help of Mahad Satyagraha Peoples Unprecedented Happiness

On 30th October 1927 a public meeting of the depressed classes people was held in Sirkavasji Jahangir Hall Apollo Harbour Mumbai at 3 p.m. under the Presidentship of Dr. Ambedkar. In the meeting many people came forward to donate money for Satyagraha at Mahad. Rs. 517, annas 9 and Paise 3 were collected as donation. Dr. Ambedkar explained the importance of Mahad Satyagraha in a very simple language and his speech made an appealing impact on the people. The meeting ended when the people raised slogans in the name of Dr. Ambedkar.

Public Meeting

On 30-10-27 at 5 p.m. in the evening a public meeting of Vatan Mahars took place. It was presided over by Shri Maruti Savaji Gayakwad. In this meeting the consent was shown to the Mahar Vatan bill which Dr. Ambedkar was going to introduce in the Legislative Council, Bombay. This meeting condemns those who are opposing the bill due to some personal prejudices. Opposition to the bill is detrimental to the interests of the Mahar community. Therefore, we appeal earnestly that under any circumstances the bill should not be opposed. Many speakers that spoke in the meeting made the similar appeal.

Those who had read the series of articles on Mahar Vatan by Dr. Ambedkar written in Bahishkrit Bharat appraised the detailed information on Vatan to the people very much convincingly.

It was warned in the meeting that some people have opened the signature campaign against the bill to be introduced in the legislature. People should be cautious of such move. After some people made their speech the meeting came to an end.

Mumbai

In Kamatipura, Mumbai there was an annual festival of

Mahar Bhajani Mandal. Shri Keshavarao Appaji Padhye, High Court Pleader, presided over the function. Almost more than two thousand people had gathered in the function. Two resolutions were passed in the meeting. (1) It approved the Mahar Vatan Reform Bill introduced in the Bombay Legislative Assembly by Dr. Ambedkar and (2) Participating in the Mahad Satyagraha and helping the Satyagraha with financial aid. Both these resolutions were passed unanimously with thunderous applause. The total amount that was collected by way of donation was Rs. 50, annas 2 and Paise 6. Shri Shivatarkar the secretary of the Satyagraha committee thanked for the support to the Satyagraha.

Yours Obediently,

Nirmalrao Limbaji Gangavane

News Summary

Some untouchables went through the road that passes closely to the Shiva temple in Vaikkom. Therefore, some prominent Hindus there have decided to purify the temple. They have decided to offer 8000 flowers to the deity of the temple to purify it.

- A news paper in Lahore has published a news that a Brahman by name Pandit Gatram has been caught while doing some heinous act with a cow. The court has punished him for 2 years' rigorous imprisonment with fine of Rs. 200/-. What a fall of the Brahmins it is!

- At a place called Thiruvarpur in Travancore, a road leading to the temple has been blocked by the Hindus as they have started constructing the wall on the road. Both Muslims and the Christians have gone to the court against constructing the wall on the road.



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I mounted on the chariot with bow in my hands and it is my satisfaction that bravery has surcharged my body. To establish fame in the world, to enhance the prestige of one's own religion and to release the earth from its burden, now Parth be doubtless, pay attention to this struggle. After hearing this there should be no need of saying anything more.

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Untouchability And The Gain of Satyagraha

"There is no point in lamenting the sorrow if it is there in public life. Instead of keeping up the weeping over it the wiseman should try to find out the remedy over it"

"Instead of doing their duty if they keep on chanting the name of God they are in reality the haters of God. The birth of God is also for the protection of the religion."

The untouchables and touchables belong to the same religion and this claim is acceptable to both. The touchables never say that the untouchables are not the Hindus when at the time of census taking in the year 1910 the Muslims asserted that the untouchables should not be listed with the Hindus as they do not enjoy any of the rights that the Hindus enjoy. Over this not only the reform minded Hindus but even the conservative minded Hindus together declared that the untouchables are the Hindus. It is also really important that the untouchables themselves also stated that they are Hindus and they should be registered as Hindus. We are Hindus is the feeling inculcated by both the people from a very ancient

time. Though this is true but now there is a big change in the minds of the untouchables of today. If we are Hindus then why should we not have those rights that the high caste Hindus enjoy? The tank where touchable Hindus draw water why should we not draw water from there? The temple in which the touchable Hindus enter and worship the God why should we also not do that. This kind of equality rights are claimed by them and they are determined fully to get these rights realised. When a man by giving up old try to pursue the new he will have a doubt that whether he is doing a proper thing. The old has a tradition and it has survived whereas the new has no tradition therefore the people generally hesitate to follow it. The condition of the untouchables is like this way. They are demanding equal rights which were not there before, they had never gone into the temple before and they had never drawn water from the public tank. It is said that the untouchables should determine to do that but if we determine to do that it will be

Our Satyagraha(Urge for truth)

And if this doubt is born in the minds of the untouchables it will not be wrong. Because the success in any work depends upon the availability of the resources as well as the moral side of the work. If the work that is undertaken is based on morality then there is no fear in its success. Because the truth always succeeds. On the contrary any movement if it is based on untruth its success becomes difficult. Therefore, every untouchable while participating in any important work be sure that the work is based on truth.

In case of Satyagraha it is necessary that we should ascertain that what is truth and what is untruth. If we find it difficult to determine what is truth then the structure of the edifice of Satyagraha is bound to remain weak. If the participant in the movement (Satyagraha) is not sure of the truth in his movement then how can he carry on the work of his Satyagraha to its final conclusion. Because the victory in the Satyagraha will always depend upon the self-power and confidence of the participant in Satyagraha. For creating this self-power in him it is necessary that he should feel confident

that the work he has undertaken is based on truth. If his feeling is based on his own doubts then the self-power required for the success of Satyagraha will not be there in him. Therefore, the Satyagrahi must be confident that his move is based on truth. In our opinion, to tell it in short, the work due to which our strength by way of participants is increasing is a virtuous work of Satyagraha(urge for truth)

This is not our thought. We have borrowed it from Geeta. Many may feel surprised that we have borrowed our idea from Geeta. Because it is generally felt by many that the Satyagraha is not the subject matter of Geeta, but in our opinion this view is wrong. The Satyagraha is the main subject of Geeta. If anybody takes into account the message of Geeta he will realise the truth of our assertion. It is necessary to take into account the question that Arjuna put to Krishna and the answer that Krishna gave to Arjuna. When Arjuna was sitting near the chariot Krishna told him that do not sit like this. Those who have snatched your Royal power make determination to fight with them. When Lord (permatma) Krishna said this then Arjuna asked him that tell how your (Agraha) urge is (Satyagraha) urge for truth? Bhagwat Geeta is an answer to this one question. We have taken the example of Geeta only because this Geeta is acceptable to both the touchables and the untouchables. Had we quoted any other religious book the touchable Hindus would have easily said that "Your evidence is not acceptable to us." They cannot reject our quoting from Geeta because they have no courage to reject Geeta.

Now we will see whether this test of Satyagraha stands to the test of Bhagwat Geeta. First we will see whether the work we have undertaken can attract the people towards it. Some people feel that our work confines to making the untouchables touchables. But this reading is wrong, due to untouchability not only the untouchables have suffered but the touchables have also suffered and ultimately the whole nation has suffered. The untouchability has not only stained the untouchables but it has also stained the touchables. The people who are called as fallen men definitely suffer humiliation but others who call them or treat them as fallen men they also

suffer from the lack of morality on their part. If untouchables came out to the path of their progress they will not only make progress but by their bravery and talent they will help the nation for its rapid progress. Thus the movement for the eradication of untouchability is not only the movement of untouchables but it is a mass movement. If it is the intension of untouchables to take interest in their own progress only even then there is no need for them to undertake an arduous task like Satyagraha. The equality and humanly treatment for which the untouchables are struggling today that equality and humanly treatment they can easily win if they change their religion. The power and energy which the untouchables are using for the struggle against untouchability the same can be utilised for the educational and economic progress of the untouchables. There is a very funny thing in the practice of the followers of Hindu religion. So long as a person is a Hindu he has to follow all his caste rules, ideas of merit, demerit, touchability, untouchability etc. Untouchables exist only in Hinduism, therefore, they have to follow all caste rules and regulations whereas Hindus while dealing with Non-Hindus have to follow only the human relations. The untouchables know this strategy very well. Untouchables are treated as low human being in Hinduism but if an untouchable becomes a Muslim or Christian he receives humanly treatment from the Hindus. Keeping this simple road of liberation aside the untouchables have decided to follow the difficult road of reforming the Hindus. Thus untouchables in their struggle of eradicating untouchability have undertaken the task of reforming the Hindus and helping the nation in its progress. The demands of untouchables is not for a special right but for equal rights. We too want the rights which touchable Hindus enjoy is our demand. Therefore, the insistence on rights by untouchables is their Satyagraha which the Geeta approves as its essence.

Some people agree that the work which the untouchables are doing is a national work yet they assert that the untouchables have no right to enter the temples. Their argument is that if the untouchables enter the temples that

would mean that they have worshipped the deity. Therefore, it is wrong on the part of the untouchables to enter the temples. Namaj is the mode of worshipping the God among the Muslims. Whereas among the Hindus there are many modes of worshipping the deity. The taking of Darshan (seeing the image of God) of God is not the only mode of worshipping the God. Worshipping the image of God, meditating the formless God or power (Nirakar) and uttering the name of God these are different modes of worship practised in Hinduism. We do not say that the untouchables should not follow any mode out of these modes. If any one mode is followed by its devotees it is enough for a Hindu so long as these modes of worship are in practice. But if anybody is interested in going near the image of the deity and worship him why should he not be permitted to do that? This mode of worship should remain open to one and closed to another, why? The untouchables whom this mode of worship is closed and if they struggle to get this right of worship why should it be improper? Where there are many modes of worship there every individual should have the right to decide about which mode of worship is proper for him? The untouchables who are struggling are doing that for this kind of right. It is wrong to argue that their side is weak.

Their another argument is that if the touchables do not allow the untouchables to worship God by entering temples the untouchables have every freedom to establish the temples of their own Gods. The untouchables who wish to worship God themselves personally should establish their own Gods. The touchable Hindus have given them this freedom. For merely worshipping there is no need that the untouchables should claim their right over the temples of the touchables. On this argument our question to these foolish people is that when a white man reserves the separate railway compartment for white man why these people should shout against the white man? Indians are free to travel in other compartments which are unreserved. Any how you have to travel to reach your destination. Then why should you insist that you must have right to travel in any compartment. The only answer to this question is that you want a right to equality. This is the answer

of the untouchables to the touchables in matters of separate temples for the untouchables. The untouchables wish to establish that by their entry into the temples the temples are not polluted and by their touch the images of the deities do not become impure. Those who are really demeritorious their touch alone will make the deity impure and not by the touch of untouchables.

The touchables should open their temples for the untouchables is the argument of the Hindus Sanghatan. This argument is different from the argument of the untouchables that the Hindus must open their temples for the untouchables otherwise they will launch Satyagraha for the temple entry. The argument of the touchables is that the temples have been built by the touchables after the division of touchables and untouchables has been formed. Then where is the big idea that the untouchables should claim their right over the temples? The untouchables agree that the touchables have built the temples and have also maintained the temples and this is acceptable to the untouchables. It is only on this basis no body will accept that the temples should not be open to the untouchables. Because these temples have been built by the touchables for the Hindus hence all Hindus can use these temples for their worship. Hinduism is a monopoly of the touchable Hindus and it is equally so of the untouchables. The prestige of Hinduism has been maintained by a Brahmin like Vashishtha, a Kshatriya like Krishna, a Vaisya like Harsha, a Sudra like Tukaram the untouchables like Valmiki, Chokhamela, Rohidas etc. The number of temples which the touchables have built the same number of temples have also been built by the untouchables. These temples belong to both the touchables as well as the untouchables. Untouchables are not aliens they are Hindus. Hinduism is their religion and they belong to Hinduism. This establishes the right of the untouchables over all the Hindu temples. Once this right of the untouchables over the Hindu temples is accepted then there is no question of Hindu practices, they stand nullified. Because in matters of public rights the individual rights are not the legal proclamation but are acquired by individual by his ability.

If the particular individual has not used his certain rights for some years it does not mean that he has lost it. The struggling for our rights we are liberalizing and humanizing Hinduism. It is a struggle for Satyagraha, now how to bring this Satyagraha to a successful conclusion is a subject worth considering.

Mode of Satyagraha.

Mahatma Gandhi is the follower of the path of Satyagraha in modern time. It is not believed everywhere that the Satyagraha means movement that has been followed by Mahatma Gandhi calling it as Satyagraha. The method of Satyagraha which Mahatma Gandhi has been following is the only method of Satyagraha and there cannot be any other mode of Satyagraha is the general understanding of the people. In the Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi there is no place for violence in it. Not only this but it is his assertion that where there is violence there is no Satyagraha. We, however do not think that this assertion of Mahatma Gandhi is logically acceptable by everyone. Whether Satyagraha or otherwise it should not be known by its method by it should be known by its ethical aspect. If the urge is for a virtuous work then that urge is Satyagraha. Violence or Non-violence are merely the means to be used in attaining the goal. If means justifies the end then how to justify Shrikrishna's advice to Arjuna that he should take up arms for the cause of the truth and fight. No Hindu can blame Shrikrishna for this advice to Arjuna. Though it is said that the Non-violence is the supreme form of religion however it is not possible to practice this form of Non-violence in everyday life in spirit and in practice. There are so many invisible delicate lives in this world that they are crushed by the mere process of opening and closing of our eyes. How can we stop the dying of these delicate lives. The researches made by Dr. Jagdishchandra Bose have proved that all plants have life. The Brahmins who do not hesitate in destroying the plants and Jain Munis (saints) who wander by wrapping the cloths around their nose what is the use of praising the importance of Non-violence to these. Moreover the Non-violence is not the useful weapon everywhere. Suppose a dacoit has come to burgle the house or to rape the women our ideal of Non-

violence will be of no use. Resist him by method which he uses on our life. It is not only the ancient scientists but even modern Fauzdari (police) law has made the provision that to some extent violence is admitted for the sake of self-protection. Though the violence is improper yet it is granted under exceptional circumstances when such situation arises that the resistance is must and there is no other go than resorting to the violence. The violence against the child is condemned but when the child comes in the way of a good cause it has to be set aside. This logic can be applied to the Satyagraha very safely. If a Satyagrahi is forced to resort to violence it can be excused in that case. When we view Gandhiji's method of Non-violent Satyagraha applying this mode we feel that Gandhiji's method is impracticable. But that method of Satyagraha is Non-violent is also not true. The violence does not mean merely the killing but injuring the mind and body of other animals is also included in it. It means that the injuring to any living being is violence. If we take this broader meaning of violence then, it seems that Gandhiji's Non-violence is a kind of violence only. Because the method of Satyagraha that Gandhiji uses by that if it does not injure the body it definitely injures the minds undoubtedly. The Satyagrahi of Gandhi's method if does not kill he disturbs the mind of his adversary due to his urge. Therefore, the argument of Gandhi that in his method of Satyagraha there is absolutely no violence is not very much correct. Really speaking be Non-violent as far as possible and adopt the violence when it needs most is the essential policy in Satyagraha for attaining the objective of Satyagraha. Gandhi has given too much stress on Non-violence not because he is a supporter of Non-violence. His reason of doing that is different. Mahatma Gandhi in his explanation says that it cannot be determined exactly "What is truth and by what test it can be ascertained." This means the evolution of any concrete test to know the truth or to determine the truth is a problem in his views. In his view the act which he calls as Satyagraha (urge for truth) same can be called as an act of untruth by others. Thus he stated in his statement, which he has submitted to the Hunter Commission. It is his opinion that where there is no

unanimity on truth there resorting to violence is not justifiable. And it is because of this reason he has completely excluded the violence from his programme of Satyagraha. The meaning of this is that if he is convinced by somebody that his Satyagraha is based on truth then for achieving his goal he is prepared to tolerate violence in his Satyagraha. This point is explained in some detail here only to show that the violence is tolerable provided it is used only to protect the moral aspect of Satyagraha. There is no need of explaining this aspect any more now. Though violence can be tolerated on the ground of principle but none desires to do that generally. Since the population of this country is disarmed the only way to undertake Satyagraha is the mode of Non-violence. The untouchables who have now prepared for Satyagraha will have to depend on Non-violent method only. Every participant in our Satyagraha movement should remember it carefully.

Satyagraha against Whom?

The Untouchables' demand for equal rights is a demand made to the touchable Hindus. Because if there is any people who oppose the untouchables demand for equal and just right it is the touchables. But this belief of the untouchables is not really true. If the untouchables determined to enter the temple or take water from the public tank and the touchables come in their way to prevent them then what will be the next step will be an important move and unless this question is answered against whom the Satyagraha is to be launched is a question that remains unanswered. If the untouchables determine to launch their Satyagraha and the touchables stage their opposition to it then there can arise a question of law and order and in that case the government will have to interfere in it to maintain law and order. Because the maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the government. And if the government interferes in it then which side it will take is important and it is this position that will decide against whom the Satyagraha is to be launched. If the government takes the side of the untouchables in their struggle to secure their just right then this question will be solved within no time. As

opposed to this if the government issues prohibition order saying that the Satyagraha of untouchables is creating problems after problems. If this happens then what is next is a problem. If this happens then the Satyagraha of the untouchables will become the Satyagraha against the government and not against the touchables. Therefore, the untouchables must know what is their responsibility in Satyagraha. In short the Satyagraha of untouchables to enter the temples or to draw water from the public tanks is not possible unless we break the prohibitory order of the government. And when we break the order of the government the government is bound to put us in jail. Hence the people who are willing to participate in the Satyagraha must be ready to go to jail if time demands. Really speaking the practice of untouchability is such a heinous thing that for its removal if lives have been sacrificed there it is worth doing. Impurity caused by the touch of the untouchables is removed by the touch of the urine of the cow is the view of the touchable Hindus. The touch of the co-religionists makes the things impure and that impurity can be removed by sprinkling the urine of the animals. This means the touch of the untouchables is unholy which makes the things impure and this unholiness and impurity can be removed by the sprinkling of the urine of the animal which in Hindu view is holier and purer. No self-respecting man will think that this is a condition worth living. Living merely is not worth living. Living like a crow is not a worthy living. Sooner or later one must die. Death is the only reality that everybody accepts. If this perishable body perishes while struggling for a good cause it is worth doing. For example many great men have sacrificed their lives for the cause of nation, truth, principle, success, prestige and for living beings. In Mahabharata the brave wife Vidula told her son that the life of hundred years by lying on bed is not a worthy life. If you die on the battlefield by showing your bravery even for a moment that is a worthy death. This is the time that every mother in untouchable community must deliver this message to her son. But this kind of fiery test is not needed for the people of untouchable community. All that they should do is that they should be prepared to go to the jail if the circumstance

demands. If they are not prepared for this then it can be said that they are not men, they are impotents. There is a saying in Mahabharat that:

The man who gets angry over the injustice and is unable to tolerate the insult is really a worthy human being.

The man who does not become angry, he and the impotent are the same. But among the untouchables there are some people who are prepared to embrace death in their struggle to end untouchability and also there are many who are prepared to go to jail for this cause. And these brave men will definitely succeed in their struggle. Though the government sends them to jail how long it will do that and how long we should depend upon the government? After some days the government also will have to think over it. If the government comes in the way of our just demands we can go to the International Court of League of Nations and place our demand of justice there. If this happens it will be the shame on the part of our government. In addition to this the touchables whom the government may punish will have also to think about it. More over the touchables who have no love lost for the untouchables they too will have to think about their own protection. The Satyagraha is our weapon to make the touchables conscious of their interest. If the touchables are determined to test the tenacity of the untouchables at the most the Satyagraha will unsuccessful. But who will suffer the loss in this? It will be the loss of the touchables. This will convince the untouchables that they have no place in Hinduism inspite of their struggle. To day the untouchables are not willing to leave Hinduism even if they are driven out of it; the same untouchables will start thinking that Hinduism is a religion of stones and there is no use of breaking one's own head against it. This circumstance will drive the untouchables to say good-bye to Hinduism. But we do not think that the touchables will allow the thing go to that extent. Our Satyagraha should be on such a large scale that the space in the jails should be inadequate for the jail-going Satyagrahis. The touchables who think that our Satyagraha is a childish game should become panicky over its vastness.

While thinking about Satyagraha it is also necessary to think that:

Who Should Do The Satyagraha?

Satyagraha is the way to get our human rights secured. In order to make the Satyagraha fruitful it is necessary that the people should participate in it in as much big number as they can. In our opinion the Satyagraha is not only the practical solution but it is a Yadnya (sacrifice) to get our heart purified. Every untouchable should jump into this Yadnya and get himself purified. As touchables regard untouchables as unholy and impure similarly untouchables too regard themselves as unholy and impure. Since the untouchables have remained for a long time under the dominance of the touchables they have formed in them the habit of doing what the touchables ask them to do and behaving what the touchables ask them to behave. The touchables are superior whereas we are their followers is the firmly rooted belief of the untouchables and hence the untouchability has taken its firm root in the Indian society. Unless all this is removed and the feeling of self-respect is generated among the untouchables the untouchability can never be eradicated from this land. Our suggestion is that we should produce a contingent of at least 5000 Satyagrahis who are generally free from their family responsibility. Wherever there is a need of launching the Satyagraha it should be done by this group of Satyagrahis. If this kind of plan is brought into execution then there will be no inadequacies in the planning of our proposed Satyagraha. If a contingent of 5000 Satyagrahis is raised and kept ready then we will stand on our sure path of success. But for raising such a huge contingent of Satyagrahis we need a provision of finance. And for making preparation for all this we will definitely need some more time also. But we should note that there is no need of waiting until all this is done. Wherever and whenever it is possible the people should launch their Satyagraha movement in order to keep the issue alive.

We are aware that some touchables are coming in the way of our Satyagraha. Some touchables are of the view that the

equality question of the untouchables will not be solved by the Satyagraha. This problem should be solved by the touchables themselves by launching their own movement. And the day on which the touchables will place the board on the temples that the untouchables should enter the temple from that day the untouchables should enter the temples without any hesitation. Till then the untouchables should keep quiet. But the question here is whether the touchables will solve this question willingly. We do not expect this to happen. Because the argument of touchables is that it is not a question of majority, nor of mercy, nor of love nor of morality or of equal rights. It is a question of the principles of religion. Untouchables cannot form any part of Virat Purusha. Because the Brahman is the mouth, the Ksatriya the arms, the Vaisya the thighs, and the Shudra the feet of the Virat Purusha. The untouchables have no place in this Virat Purusha. The untouchables are the shoes in the feet of this Virat Purusha. The shoes will never become the part of the body. Similarly the untouchables will never become the integral part of the Hindu society. To expect this to happen is a foolish thing. The untouchables are outside the orbit of Hindu religion. The untouchables are the separate part of the Virat Purusha and this separate part has no relation to his body is the view of the touchables and in their view it is wrong to make efforts to reform the Hindu view on the eradication of the untouchability.

There are some other touchables who think that if the untouchables resort to Satyagraha they will not be successful in carrying on it to its successful conclusion. Because they will lose whatever sympathy they have from some touchables as this would be an attack on the entire community of the touchables and hence both radical and conservative minded Hindus will come together to resist the movement of the untouchables. We tell them that if you have any sympathy towards us then do not threaten us by saying that some touchables are against our Satyagraha. If some touchables have some sympathy for our movement then let them join our Satyagraha. Otherwise whether you are friendly or inimical to us it makes no difference to us.

When the movement to end the Negroes' slavery started in America there were formed two divisions among the white men in America. The white men in Southern part of America were opposed to the abolition of slavery whereas the white men in northern part of America were in favour of the abolition of Negro slavery. However no white man ever told the Negroes that they should not launch the movement of their freedom because some white men opposed to their movement. On the contrary the white men on the issue of Negro slavery fought a war against their own white brothers and by shedding their blood abolished Negro slavery. Taking clue from this we must tell our touchable brothers that they must do what the white men in America did to abolish the Negro slavery. Otherwise by their sweet words they will continue to deceive us as they have been doing till this date.

There is a third group of touchables which argue that both touchables and untouchables are the parts of the same society. Hence there is no use of making Satyagraha against our own men. It should be done against the alien people. When the aliens are attacking us we must unite instead of quarreling amongst us. This is a sweet piece of advice but why should the untouchables listen to this? The religion in which the untouchables have no place, they are treated as the shoes in the foot in that religion, why should the untouchables fight to protect such a religion? This is the responsibility of the touchables. Because the rights of religion in Hinduism is their monopoly. We are there for eating and you are there for fighting is the advice of the touchables. The untouchables are not the foolish people to listen their advice. In fact untouchables are feeling it as their mistake in helping Hinduism in its protection till this day. Hence the advice of the touchables mentioned above is unacceptable to them. Taking advantage of the difficulties of the adversaries one should formulate his policies of securing gains. The untouchables are doing the same in formulating their policies in the light of the difficulties of the touchables, when the imperial government faces the war the touchables hold it as dilemma and ask for more concessions in a similar way when the untouchables adopt the same policy

towards the touchables for their rights what is wrong with the untouchables? Now they say that we should not quarrel amongst us. Our reply to them is that they should see what Geeta says in this regard. We are doing the same which has been told by Shri Krishna to Arjuna as his message.

When the war was about to start between Kauravas and Pandavas Arjun the war hero of the Pandavas took his chariot just to the central place of the war-field. He then threw his glance around the war field. He saw his own blood relations, the men of his clan and his own teacher in the party of the Kauravas. Then he could grasp the nature of the war that he was going to fight. He then unwilling to fight kept his bow and arrows on the ground and sat himself down. It does not mean that Shrikrishna did not know that the Kauravas and Pandavas are kith and kin. Even when Kauravas were refusing the right of the Pandavas the men like Bhishm, Drone, Vidur etc. were on the side of the Kauravas. If the principle of internal quarrel is wrong then Shrikrishna would have told Arjuna not to fight on the contrary he told Arjuna that this kind of impotency is wrong on your path. Give up this weakness and stand for the war, he told Arjuna. He knew that lot of people will be killed in this war, but he did not care for that. His plan was that the Pandavas must get their kingdom back because it was usurped by the Kauravas, Arjuna's Satyagraha is just negligible compared to the cause for which the untouchables are doing their Satyagraha. Pandavas were quarreling for their own kingdom whereas untouchables are struggling for their human rights. When the man loses his human rights he loses everything but when the man loses his kingdom his rights remain. The kingdom or no kingdom Pandavas would have remained alive but the untouchables without their humanity are the dead people eventhough they are alive somehow. If for the sake of kingdom Shrikrishna is asking Arjuna to kill the people of his kin and kith why should the touchables object to the Satyagraha of the untouchables who are resorting to that to regain their lost humanity. Truly speaking there is no need of hearing these touchables. Because they may be our well-wishers but they are not proper men to guide us in this

respect. It is not a question of education, knowledge or wisdom but it is a question of authority of caste, of selfishness and of mental conviction. Therefore, instead of falling prey to their advice we must tell them clearly that , they should not take trouble in advising us.

In any struggle first of all there is an exchange of views. If this move fails then there comes the occasion of war. In matters of the eradication of untouchability the much has been done by way of discussion. From the days of the birth of the untouchability to our own days many Mahatmas have made efforts to do away with it. But the tenacity of the touchables to maintain untouchability is terribly uncompromising .in case of untouchables the touchable Hindus are more cruel than Duryodhana who told the Pandavas that he will not give the land worth the size of a needle. There is sign that the touchables will not change in their attitude towards the untouchables. As a matter of fact this injustice has continued because we have been enduring it. If we determine to throw it off then nobody will have any courage to impose it on us. The Brahmanism which has degraded us to a lowest position the same Brahmanism has also tried to degrade the caste like Kayastha Prabhu. But the Prabhus awoke in time and resisted it therefore they have succeeded in maintaining the position of their caste. When the wheel of time was moving in an opposite direction even then our ancestors kept themselves sleeping. Like all others had our ancestors also resisted the injustice done against them then today the word untouchability would have become merely a matter of history. It is really shameful that our ancestors did not do that. But our ancestors were uneducated hence they could be excused for their tolerance of injustice. But the present generation has got the opportunity of receiving the education and our ancestors did not have that opportunity for them. Therefore, whatever work the last generations did not do must be done by the present generation and it is its moral duty and responsibility too.

(1)

Newspaper views on the Mahar Vatan Bill

**Introduced by Dr. Ambedkar in
Bombay Legislative Assembly**

Hunter

(Dated 11-11-1927)

Dr. Ambedkar's Attack On Mahar Vatan:

On 26-10-27 a meeting was called at Mahar Chawl, in Mumbai. The meeting was presided over by Tulsiram Yesuji Phulpagar Deshmehatar, Junnar. The following resolution was passed:

Resolution

Dr. Ambedkar has written in Bahishkrit Bharat that the Mahar Vatan should be abolished. He was to explain about it in the public meeting of 25-10-27. But the meeting did not take place he has now introduced that resolution in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. In order to make that resolution known to the people it should be published is the opinion of this meeting.

The Subject Of The Public Letter

If Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion is passed in the council then the Mahars will have to surrender their Inam lands and Vatan compulsorily. The government will take away the lands from them. their Baluta income will be stopped. Salaried posts will not be given to them. Government will appoint its own servants . The government has already closed the doors of military services to the untouchable communities. They are not taken in police services. They are not appointed on important posts. They are not appointed in cloth making section of the weaving mills what is the way out if Vatan is abolished. It seems that Dr. Ambedkar has not thought over this. He is inexperienced. He has not done anything for the

untouchables so far. If Vatani lands are usurped by somebody the Collector restores that land to the Vatan holder. Dr. Ambedkar does not do anything in this connection. His stand is harming his own men. Therefore, everybody must protest against him.

This letter has come from the secretary, Depressed India Association, Clerk Road, Mumbai. For want of space only the summary of the letter has been printed here. 58 people have signed the letter.

We are expressing our opinion on the subject of Vatan:

We feel that the above mention Sabha has misunderstood Dr. Ambedkar. Harming the cause of the untouchables can never be the creed of Dr. Ambedkar. Our untouchable brothers should listen to us carefully. This experiment has already been made in Karveer Nagar. Kulkarni Vatan and Mahar Vatan have been abolished and their lands have been put in Rayatava system there. The abolition of Vatan does not mean the confiscation of Vatani land by the government. This is the misunderstanding of some people. In this there is only the change in the status of land. The possession of land will have to remain with the same person. The government has no power to disturb the ownership of the land. Now there is a question of job. The job of Kulkarni was a job of prestige. The entire revenue record was with Kulkarni and he has his position in the village. His was a lucrative position. This is not the position of Mahars. The Mahars have to take care of the horse if Mamledar or Fauzdar visits the village. He has to remain present there. He has to reach the message from village to village. He has to keep the watch throughout the night. He has to clean the village roads, remove the dirt and filth. He has to reach the message of the death of a high Caste Hindu to the relatives. His remuneration was some corn once in a year at the time of harvest, stale bread once in a week and carrying the dead animal of the Rayats. The quarrel among the Mahars while sharing the value of the skin of the animal and other things was quite common. This is the kind of worthless service that the Mahars are doing to live in perpetual poverty. The

fragmentation of their land has added to their poverty further. Many have mortgaged their land because it cannot be sold by law. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur liberated Mahars by abolishing their Vatan. He made them owners and the government's authority over the Vatan lands of the Mahars was removed. Nobody has said that the experiment made in Kolhapur is wrong. The origin of untouchability is in the Baluta system. By breaking this system the Maharaja of Kolhapur made the untouchables touchables. It is with this view in mind Dr. Ambedkar must have introduced the Mahar Vatan Bill in Mumbai Legislative Assembly. The Mahar brothers should not fall prey to the slavish Vatan system. The Vatan holders should give up their obstinacy. The world is advancing with the help of the freedom of ownership, individual liberty and the freedom of expectations. Our people must pay their attention to it is our request to them.

Deen Mitra (friend of the poor) dated 9-11-27

Dr. Ambedkar And His Circle

The Editor of "Bahishkrit Bharat" has written a very learned article in his paper dated 2-10-27 on Mahar Vatan. As the condition of the Vatan holding Mahars is the worst the article of Dr. Ambedkar on it is the best. Of course this article of Dr. Saheb is beyond the reach of mental ability of the Mahars. We have received a letter signed by 58 people against this article. We are very sorry that for want of space we were not in a position to print the entire letter. They have protested against Dr. Ambedkar in this letter. Vatan system must be abolished is the contention of Dr. Ambedkar in his writings and this contention is not liked by these people. In the opinion of these people the Vatan system must be continued and if somebody has usurped some part of it that also must be restored. Their suggestion is that the government should simply wink at Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion. The Mahars of all the places should call the public meeting and register their protest against the suggestion made by Dr. Ambedkar. Because if the Vatan is abolished the Mahars will become helpless without shelter. The Mahars will then be wanderers like the stone cutting tribals.

This is the summary of the letter signed by 58 people. In our opinion it is wrong on the part of the Mahars to oppose Dr. Ambedkar. It is true that if Vatan is abolished there will be some losses to the Mahars. But the advantage that the Mahars will accrue is greater than the losses they will sustain. Instead of eating the dirty and leftover food eating the fresh roti of ones own is always a worthy living. There is a world of difference between the Vatan of Patil, Deshmukh, Desai etc. and the Vatan of Mahars. The Mahars are compelled to do all kind of dirty and filthy works under their Vatan. No body can say that Mahars should do such dirty work. This is a blot on humanity under Vatan system.

Exchange of Views

Supporters of Vatan Must Think

By Bhikaji Ganesh Bhosale

Pune

After reading Dr. Ambedkar's article on Vatan in Bahishkrit Bharat and a letter published in public meeting of Mumbai under 58 peoples signature I am writing this letter mentioning my own views. Among the untouchables in Maharashtra the population of Mahars is bigger in size and this population of Mahars is enchained in slavery for so many years. The Mahars are living in this slavery for generation after generation and their every coming generation is also finding no escape from this tragedy. The educated Mahars are worried about this dilemma and for the last many years they are pondering over it. In this system it has been seen that the Vatan is the cause of their slavery. Not only this but no body should think that under such Vatan system the people that love their nation love their self-respect and the lover of full freedom can never be born. Hence how to abolish Vatan system is a question on which the educated Mahars are worried day and night. Fortunately a learned jewel like Dr. Ambedkar has availed himself to guide the destiny of these people. He is a providential gift to the untouchables. Dr. Ambedkar by analysing the Vatan problem threadbare has decided to

introduce the bill to abolish the Mahar Vatan. The entire Mahar community is paying its attention towards the bill. Is it not a surprise that a handful men of Mahar community in Bombay should oppose the bill?

This opposing group is led by Narayanrao Bhosale who is misleading the people.

Great saint Tukaram says:

How does the fish sleeps in the water can be known only by taking birth as a fish."

Leave aside the Vatan he (Bhosale) has not even seen his village. Why then he should unnecessarily praise the Vatan and misguide the people of his own society. Had Vatan been such an important thing he should have purchased the Vatan in some village and explained the importance of Vatan to his men in society.

Had there been any profit and the prestige in Vatan every individual in Mahar community would have preferred only the Vatan instead of doing any other work. But the worthlessness of the Vatan has been experienced by many Mahars in our changing society. Their question is that the Mangs have no Vatan then why have they not progressed. The answer to this question is that the untouchables have been entangled into the Varnashrama Dharma of the touchables. It is only under the British rule they are being relieved slowly from that social slavery.

However the progress is not possible unless the awakening is not born in the enslaved society. Where the Mahars became the full-fledged slaves inspite of their big population there what can be the position of Mangs who are in microscopic minority. Hence in this age of awakening one should accept only that by which he can make progress. If the people work with the idea of self-rule, self-respect and perseverance no one can arrest their progress. Leading a parasitical life like some insects that live on the body of the animals is a great fall of humanity. Hence to plead for such anti-social practices to the naïve masses is not proper. Anybody will condemn the pleading for such

age-old evil practice like the Vatan of Mahars. Opposition to a just cause merely to oppose an individual is wrong.

The Mahars in the villages are of the view that if their lands are retained they have no objection if other things that come under the Vatan are done away with.

Hence the opponents by keeping their minds cool should help this task of abolishing the Mahar Vatan otherwise this yoke of Vatan

will remain always on the neck of the Mahars.

Date : 13-11-26

Support To Dr. Ambedkar's' Bill

To Shri Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, Editor Bahishkrit Bharat:

We the undersigned residents of Tasgaon, Post Rahimatpur, District Satara lay the following few lines for your consideration. We read the issue of Bahishkrit Bharat dated 4-11-27. Our honourable Saheb has taken up the issue of abolishing the Mahar Vatan. In Bombay some Mahars are opposing this move by organising the meetings and misguiding the people. These organisers of the meetings and their presidents must not be the Vatan holding Mahars is our firm conviction. If they are Vatan holders then they should go to their villages and by taking stick in their hand get the experience of working as village worker under their Vatan. They will then really know what is Vatan holding Mahar in villages. Shri Tulsiram Yesuji Fulpagare catches hold of the road mongering Mahars in Bombay and obtains their signatures against Dr. Ambedkar's proposal. Instead of doing this he should go to the villages and obtain the signatures. Whatever it is our appeal to Dr. Saheb is that keeping all the difference of opinions he should make serious efforts and get the Mahar Vatan abolished by the government at the earliest.

Thanking You,
Yours faithfully

- (1) Tanaji Ganesh Bhise
- (2) Shivaram Parsharam Kamble
- (3) Chokhu Bayu Kamble
- (4) Bayaji Babaji Kamble
- (5) Maruti Piraji Kamble
- (6) Shankar Parsharam Kamble
- (7) Santaram Savala Kamble
- (8) Sakharam Tukaram Kamble

Note: the misunderstanding about Fulpagare, we hope, will be removed by the explanatory note he has published

Editor : Bahishkrit Bharat

Shortsightedness of Some People About Mahar Vatan

By Shivappa Laxman Asode, Borgaon,
Taluka Chikodi

Compared to other Vatandars Vatan holding Mahars have remained far behind. The reason of their backwardness is their ignorance, therefore their rights have been deprived of by high caste men. In former days the Caste Hindus by instigating quarrels between Mahars and Mangs used to get the village work done from the Mangs which the Mahars used to do and harassed the Mahars. They started giving Mahars only half the share. Not only Baluta but even lands of Mahar were also usurped by the high caste men. Many such examples from the villages can be cited. All this has been explained by Dr. Ambedkar Saheb in Bahishkrit Bharat. The Vatani system which Dr. Ambedkar Saheb has explained in the issues, 11, 12 and 13 is bound to appeal the rational minded men. It is wrong to state that Dr. Saheb does not know much about Mahar Vatan. His writing in the Bahishkrit Bharat on Vatan shows that he has studied the problem of Mahar Vatan very appropriately. The suggestion of Dr. Ambedkar is that the Vatan lands should be retained with present owners and made it taxable like all other lands of Rayats. All dirty and filthy work that Mahars do for Rayats of village called Baluta work for which they get some stale bread and some corns once in a harvest time must

be stopped. As far as the government work is concerned the government should appoint paid servants in place of Baluta holding Mahars.

Bury the Ghost of Casteism

Article No. 2

(By Krisna Nayaku Sutar)

The rights of the untouchables usurped by the high caste Hindus must be restored to them.

Why should the untouchables remain so much poor and expect something from others? They should get their self-elevation done by themselves. It is really praiseworthy that there is going on a movement among the untouchables to lead a life of self-help. It is only by this way the untouchables can get their lost rights.

There can be no objection in dining with them. There is a learned jewel like Dr. Ambedkar. Though Lokmanya Tilak was a conservative minded man he too thought that the caste system should not survive. In his lectures in the Bharat lecture series he had stated that:

"How much rights the subjects have and how much of them they enjoy must be known even to the boys. Similarly due to caste distinctions, caste hatred and malice among the castes are the factors that are burning the life of the nation. This must also be made known to the boys. The boys must also know that there is a great need of breaking the caste system."

It is very much well known that Mahatma Gandhi does not believe in the caste system.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur weakened the caste practices by openly dinning with the untouchables.

Swami Vivekananda who unfurled the flag of Hinduism in America states that:

Caste is not a religious institution. It is a social institution. By its decomposition it is polluting the atmosphere in India. It can be destroyed only by granting the rights to those from whom the rights are

deprived. The well-known patriot Lala Lajapat Roy says, "Hindus must remember that the existing caste distinctions are bound to disappear. If Hindus as a society are to progress there is no other go except removing the existing social barriers."

Look at Japan. So long as the caste system was dancing on the platform of Japanese society the Japan was lying in the dust of its backwardness. But after it buried its caste system it has now reached the zenith of its progress within a period of 50 to 60 years. The cause of nation's progress depends on the religious reforms in any country. In England in its struggle for religious reform many sacrificed their lives then only the English nation came on the path of its progress.

Today England is the leading nation in the world. The leaders who are shouting for the progress of Indian nation should try to bring about religious reform first, and that will automatically bring about the progress of Indian nation.

Hindu religious preceptors who are enjoying their life on the money of the naïve masses should open their eyes and look to other nations and do something for improving the condition of Hindu religion.

Because of casteism in our country our society, our religion and our nation are suffering. Some leaders due to their blind faith are purposely ignoring the evil effect of the caste system. At present Shuddhi movement is going on. The name of the movement is good. In this movement the Brahmin leaders readmit to Hinduism those who have gone to other religions. But it is said that there is no inter-dining among them. whether the Brahmin leaders of Shuddhi movement are prepared to do inter-dining with the untouchables? it is difficult to say whether it is a Shuddhi movement or a Brahmin movement.

Due to caste system the Hindu religion and the Indian nation have suffered beyond any measure, therefore, it is necessary that the Non-Brahmin leaders must pay their attention to this problem.

The ghost of Chaturvarnya alias caste system must be buried once for all and the insect eating Hinduism must be destroyed permanently. In order to bring Hindu religion and the Hindu nation on the path of progress our Non-Brahmin leaders should do their best and take the credit of attaining this objective. May God bless them in this endeavour.

**“May Hindu Religion Be The Guiding
Force of the World.”**

Om! Shanti! Shanti!

Self-Introduction

Programmes and Other Information

The Movement of The Untouchables In Dadar, Nayagaon Area,

On 5-11-27 there was a public meeting of the mill workers of Kohinoor mill at Nayagaon in the evening to discuss the educational problem of the untouchables. Dr. Govande presided over the meeting. on this occasion the workers from the area of Dr. Govande's influence spoke in the meeting.

In the meeting the following resolutions were passed.

- (1) For the last two years the compulsory education system has been introduced but even then the number of students in Nayagaon has not increased much. We wish that the officers and the members in the municipality will pay attention towards the increase of the number in the schools.
- (2) With a view to make all-round progress of the untouchables a fortnightly paper has been started by Dr. B.R.Ambedkar. this paper should be given patronage by subscribing to it. This Sabha therefore requests all the Somavamshiya brothers to subscribe to the paper.
- (3) Many years have gone after the end of the war. The prices of the things have come down. Therefore, the House Development Department should reduce the rent of the

houses, it should be brought down to Rs. 3 per month.

All the above mentioned resolutions were unanimously passed.

Amareli (Kathewad)

On Thursday dated 10-11-27 there was organised a public meeting of the untouchables in the Laxminarayan Temple at Amareli. Shri Dhobhan Mithaleua, the leader of the untouchables presided over the meeting. Shri Shantaram Potanis, Palalakha, Meya, Khade, Heamir Mepa etc. were present in the meeting. The following resolutions were passed in the meeting.

“the untouchables are launching their Satyagraha at Mahad under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar on 25th December 1927. This meeting endorses its full support to the Satyagraha.” Many spoke in this meeting in support of the Satyagraha.

The Conference Of The Vatan Holding Mahars Of the Solapur District, Solapur.

Session 2nd

On 26th and 27th November 1927 a conference of the Mahars will take place in Maharwada in Solapur. The conference will be presided over by Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. It is requested that the Mahars of all the villages should attend the meeting. The Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha has undertaken many works of social welfare. But there is a shortage of funds with the Sabha. Hence the Sabha is finding it difficult to do many works which it wishes to do. Many people find it difficult to reach the government officers to get their grievances redressed. The people in the untouchable community sometimes spend money on unnecessary customary things due to their illiteracy and ignorance. It is, therefore, necessary to help financially the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha founded in Mumbai to ameliorate the condition of the untouchables. Therefore, while coming to the conference the people of big villages should bring at least Rs. 10 and small villages at least Rs. 5 to donate to the

Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha. Money thus collected will be given to the organisers of the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha in the meeting itself and the donors will be given the receipt there only.

Executive Committee Members

Visvanath Meghaji Bansode	Mukinda Kundli Bavare
Nivruti Tukaram Bandsode	Rama Tukaram Sarvade
Papa Somaji Talabhandare	Vithal Hari Sarvade
Bhikaji Gurappa Talbhandare	Tukaram Aduba Bavare
Bali Tuljaram Talmohite	

Chairman, Reception Committee -Jivappa Subhanrao Aidale

Secretary - Udhav Dhondo Shivasharan

Treasurer - Hari Bhau Torne

Conference Of The Untouchable Women

Srimati Bayanabai Sakare and Ratibai Puranic, organisers, Bahishkrit Bharat Bhagini Conference, Wardha, inform that their first meeting will take place at Wardha under the Chairmanship of Shrimati K.S. Nayadu on 19th and 20th November in Shri Khare theatre. The well-wisher and the women of untouchable caste are requested to attend the meeting.*

Mahar Vatan And Dr. Ambedkar's Bill

A Huge Public Meeting in Mumbai

Three Thousand People Supported

The Bill

(From Reporter)

Knowing that Dr. Ambedkar is going to introduce a bill for abolishing the Mahar Vatan in Bombay Legislative Assembly some Mahars are spreading misunderstanding against Dr. Ambedkar's bill by carrying on their propaganda

* This seems to be the first untouchable women conference ever organised.

in Bombay. To prevent this a meeting was arranged under the Chairmanship of Shri S.K. Bole in the Lokhandi Chawl of Madanpura on 5th November 1927. Many Mahars from the villages attended the meeting. It was a gathering of about 3000 people. Dr. Ambedkar explained the Bill in a very simple language. When he said that if anybody has any doubt he can ask about it. Then Shri Narayan Dhanaji Bhosale, secretary, Depressed India Association stood up and started reading some part of Dr. Ambedkar's bill. But he was not in a position to read it properly. The people started ridiculing him. But Dr. Ambedkar pacified them and told them that let Shri Bhosale ask about his doubt and the people should listen him peacefully. Then Shri Bhosale asked some questions which Dr. Ambedkar answered very aptly and convincingly. Then Shri Bhosale and one more person left the meeting and went away. None left the meeting and went away with him. Those 58 people who had signed the letter opposing the bill told in the meeting that their signatures were obtained by false propaganda. To indicate their support to the Bill the same people proposed the following resolution.

Resolution

"The explanation which Dr. Ambedkar gave about his Mahar Vatan Bill has convinced us that the Bill is beneficial to the Mahars. Therefore this meeting gives its consent to the Bill whole-heartedly."

This resolution was proposed by Shri Tulsiram Yesuji Fulpagare and was seconded by Shri Govindrao Dingarkar.

Meeting of Vatan-Holding Mahars of Nasik District

On 6-11-27 the Vatan-holding Mahars of Nasik district organised a public meeting at Nasik under the Chairmanship of Shri S.Y. Rokade. The following resolutions were passed in the meeting.

- (1) This meeting of the Vatan-holding Mahars expresses its

loyalty to the Indian government.

- (2) The meeting endorses Mahar Vatan Bill which has been introduced in the Bombay Legislative Assembly by Dr. Ambedkar because the bill will help the progress of the Mahars. Some people are due to their individual hatred are propagating against the bill. This meeting requests the people that they should not fall prey to the wrong propaganda of the bill. This meeting, similarly, requests the honourable Governor that His Excellency may note that this Sabha fully supports the Vatan Bill of Dr. Ambedkar.
- (3) This meeting protests the meeting that was organised under the Chairmanship of Fulpagar on 26-10-27 in Mahar Chawl, Mumbai.
- (4) We congratulate the paper Bahishkrit Bharat.
- (5) We authorise the Chairman of this meeting to send the copy of these resolutions to an appropriate authority.

Varhad (Vidarbha) State Conference of the Untouchables Session Second

Dated 13 Nov. 1927

This conference was organised in Indrabhuvan theatre Amravati. The proposed President of the meeting Dr. Ambedkar arrived at Badnera where he was welcomed by Shri Gavai, MLC and they reached Amravati at 1:30 p.m. A big gathering of both touchables and untouchables had collected on the station. The work of the meeting started at 3:30 p.m. In the beginning some boys sang the welcome song in a melodious voice. Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh explained the importance of today's meeting for the Shri Ambadevi temple Satyagraha that is to take place soon. He then introduced Dr. Ambedkar and requested him to preside over the function. Non-Brahmin leader Nanasaheb Amrutkar seconded it. Then Dr. Ambedkar took the chair in a thunderous applaud. He made a small speech. After electing the rules committee the meeting suspended its work till tomorrow. The following prominent members were seen in the meeting.

- (1) Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh
- (2) Barr. Tidake
- (3) Shri Chombal Vakil
- (4) Shri Gavai MLC
- (5) Shri K.B. Deshmukh
- (6) Dr. Bhaj-raja
- (7) Dr. Patwardhan
- (8) Shri Uttamrao Kadam

The following people had specially come for the conference.

- (1) Shri Nanasaheb Amrutkar
- (2) Shri D.V.Naik
- (3) Shri Dattatray Vithal Pradhan
- (4) Shri R.D.Kavali and
- (5) Shri D.R.Raravikar

The rules making committee met on the same day and decided upon the subjects of the next day meeting.

14th November, 1927

In the meeting at 7 a.m. Dr. Ambedkar was honoured by giving him Pan-Supari (chewing leaves and betel nut) a function of honour by the untouchable students of Amravati and the students took their group photo with him. Dr. Ambedkar advised them how to build their character and in what way they can struggle to remove the stigma of untouchability attached to them permanently. Then he returned back to the conference which started at 8 a.m. But soon after the meeting started a news of Balasaheb Ambedkar's death reached to Dr. Ambedkar telegraphically.

Everybody felt very bad about the news but Dr. Ambedkar very courageously carried on the work of the meeting and proved his sterling qualities of leadership. The following resolutions were passed in the meeting.

- (1) After hearing the news of the death of Dr. Ambedkar's

elder brother, Shri Balasaheb this meeting plunged into sorrow. The meeting kept its work suspended for 10 minutes.

- (2) (A) the senior and honourable leader Shri Ganesh Shrikrishna Khaparde, the member council of state has asked for more time to bring about compromise with the temple committee. Hence he requested the temple Satyagraha committee to postpone the Satyagraha for sometime. The meeting resolved for the postponement of Satyagraha.
- (B) however Satyagraha committee can wait for three months hereafter and beyond that
- (C) this meeting informs the Satyagraha committee that they can enter the temple and go upto the end of the temple from inside. They under any circumstance should not accept any other condition regarding the enter y of the temple.
- (D) this committee advises the Satyagraha committee that if it comes to launching of Satyagraha it should be done collectively.

Many speakers spoke on these resolutions and these resolutions were passed unanimously. In the end Shri Naik, Shri Gavai, and Shri Amrutkar thanked Dr. Ambedkar and others in appropriate words and the meeting came to an end by shouting slogan of victory to Shahu Maharaj and Dr. Ambedkar.

Self-Introduction

Tea Party Hosted by Bahishkrit Hitakarni

Sabha in Honour of Mr. Mardi Jones, M.P.

In order to know more about the people called the untouchables Mr. Mardi the member of British Parliament especially met Dr. Ambedkar. Both discussed about the problem of untouchables for more than an hour. Mr. Mardi expressed the desire that he will be happy if he is introduced

to some of the workers of the Sabha. On 4-11-27 Dr. Ambedkar invited him for tea party.

On that day 70 to 75 people from Bombay and some from outside Bombay had gathered there. Among them some Parsi friends, including Mr. G.K. Nariman were also there. Shri D.V. Naik, Pradhan brothers, Shri Kavali etc. were prominent among them.

The prominent members among the untouchables that were present were: Sambhaji Rokade, Sitaram Shivatarkar, Nivruti Jadhav, Nirmal Gangavane, Ganapat Vithal Borgharkar, Revaji Dolas, Govind Parmar etc.

While introducing Mr. Mardi the famous historian Mr. Nariman said that Mardi Saheb was a worker in mines and he has experience of doing mine work by himself. It is because of this that he has love and affection towards the hard-working people, like untouchables. If the problems of the untouchables are to be understood it is necessary to know them and their leaders closely and it is with this view in mind he has come here to meet you and Dr. Ambedkar Saheb. On behalf of all of you I welcome him heartily amongst us.

Sir, you must be knowing one society ill-treating the other and also the many systems of human slavery but the social, economic and religious slavery of the untouchables which we have in our country is incomparable and not to be found anywhere in the world. Mere touch, sound and the sight of the untouchables together or singly pollutes some people is the view of some Brahmins in this country and these Brahmins are regarded for many centuries as the leaders of the whole Hindu society. The untouchables in this Brahman dominated Hindu society are regarded as lower than the animals. In many places some roads are closed to them. In many villages the availability of water is their big problem. In a Brahmin dominated society the untouchability has culminated to its satanic perfection. The problem of untouchables is a problem of humanity. It is on this ground I request Mr. Mardi Jones to draw the attention of British Parliament and the British government in India towards the problem of untouchables in India.

In his reply speech Mr. Mardi Jones said “the amount of knowledge which he got after meeting Dr. Ambedkar on the problems of untouchables, I would not have got that much even after reading many books. I now know how much inadequacies I had in my knowledge of untouchables gathered through books. The population of untouchables in India exceeds the population of England, Ireland and Scotland put together. It is shameful that such a huge population is leading the miserable life deprived of all human rights. Like the Brahmins of this country the English people also think that the God has created them for the welfare of the whole humanity. In Europe also the injustices and atrocities were done in the name of religion. The rule of Pope had become unjust the protestants defeated it. It is a mystery that the Brahmanism has survived in India for such a long period of time. But its days are numbered now. The people who are sitting here in front of me among them it is difficult to know who is touchable and who is untouchable unless it is revealed by some one. It is a matter of pride for me that I got acquainted with a learned man like Dr. Ambedkar. It is the good fortune of the untouchables that a great man like Dr. Ambedkar is born in them. I am thankful to you for the kind of feelings you expressed about me.

The summary of the speech of Mr. Mardi Jones was narrated to the people in a simple Marathi language by Shri Devarao Naik. The meeting was over after tea party.

Pre-Preparation for Mahad Satyagraha

The competition among the villagers

To participate the Mahad Satyagraha

On 31-10-27 there was a public meeting to participate the Mahad Satyagraha at Parel, Taluka Mahad. Shri Sayaji Gangaram Jadhav presided over the meeting. Shri Gopal Sakharam Sankapal, Mahadev Arjun Salve, Pandurang Mahadeo Bavurkar and Bhavik Rathu Phalankar spoke in the meeting. Nineteen people registered their names for participating the Satyagraha.

Here the people agreed to donate $6\frac{1}{2}$ maund rice and Rs. $6\frac{1}{2}$ for the Satyagraha.

A similar meeting took place at Haldun under the Chairmanship of Deo Gavaru Jadhav on 10-11-27 . Shri Budhaji Balu Jadhav, Shri Babaji Raju More, Shri Pandurang Mahadev Bavurkar, Shri Bhaviknath Ratnu Salve and Shivaram Gopal Jadhav spoke in the meeting. The people donated Rs. 8 and 7 annas.

On 3-11-27 there took place a meeting at Poladpur, Taluka Mahad, to discuss the issue of participating the Satyagraha at Mahad. Shri Raghonand Poladpurkar presided over the meeting. Shri Gavarya Bhiku Kotwalkar, Shri Devaji Gavaru Haldulkar, Shri Shivaram Gopal Jadhav, Shri Pandurang, Mahadev Vaurkar and Shri Bhavnik Nath Buwa Phalankar spoke in the meeting.

Donation:

2 Maund Rice and Rs. 3.

Twelve villages together donated 22 Maunds of rice and Rs. 36.

Here there is a list of many villages particularly of Mahad Taluka, which conducted the public meetings, collected rice and money and donated to the Mahad Satyagraha. There is also a big list of names that were registered for participating in the Mahad Satyagraha.



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I mounted on the chariot with bow in my hands and it is my satisfaction that bravery has surcharged my body. To establish fame in the world, to enhance the prestige of one's own religion and to release the earth from its burden, now Parth be doubtless, pay attention to this struggle. After hearing this there should be no need of saying anything more.

Year 1st] Friday, 23 December, 1927. [Issue 19, 20, 21st

Day- to-day Problems

1. Some nineteen months have passed to the declaration of the untouchables that they will launch Satyagraha at Mahad in connection with the Chaudar tank there. But it is a matter of surprise that the touchables of Mahad have not bothered about the declaration of the untouchables. Perhaps the touchables must have thought that this is merely a threat of the untouchables and in reality they will not do anything of that kind. If at all they come we will see that may be their view. But now when they know that untouchables are determined to launch their Satyagraha at Mahad they are trying to play some tricks. The touchables at Mahad have now applied to the District Magistrate that he should prevent the Satyagraha by proclaiming Indian Penal Code 144 in Mahad. To justify this stand further the Mahad municipality did a very funny thing. Its members passed a resolution nullifying the earlier resolution of Mahad Municipality which had opened the Chaudar tank by its resolution to all the people irrespective of caste. The voters of the Mahad Municipality assembled in a meeting and gave their decision on this. 261 voted against the use of the

tank by the untouchables. 7 voted in favour of the untouchables. 13 voters remained neutral. The record of all this happening was sent to the Collector and the request was made to him to issue the prevention order. We give no value to this mischievous game. When it is a public tank nobody, even the government, cannot prevent anybody drawing water from it. If the tank is a private property then there is no business for anybody to enter into the quarrel. If it belongs to somebody the untouchables will try to deal with him, there is no cause for municipality to interfere in it.

2. It is learnt that the District Magistrate has also formed the same opinion. On 7-12-27 the District Magistrate personally visited Mahad to discuss issue with the local people there. He called both the touchables and untouchables together and discussed the problem with them. In the end he told the touchables that the government will not prevent the untouchables from touching the tank. If you want this to happen then go to the civil court and get the order passed then preventing untouchables from the tank will be your right. So long as you do not do this the government will have to stand by the just cause of the untouchables. We will have to see how the touchables of Mahad act over this suggestion. As per the suggestion made by the Collector this issue will most probably reach the civil court. We are ready for that. But the touchables should think twice before shaking the peg and tightening it.

3. Whatever may be the action of the Mahad Municipality and its voters there is no unanimity between them and the people of Mahad over the issue of untouchables drawing water from the tank. One thing is clear that the opinion of many people is in favour of the untouchables. This is clear from the information of the meeting of the citizens of Mahad that took place in the temple of Vireshwar on 27th November, 1927. That information is printed elsewhere in this issue. The information printed in Dnyan Prakash it appears that those who organised this meeting their intension was to get the resolution opposing the Satyagraha of the untouchables passed by the citizens assembled there. But they had not declared their intension earlier. They had simply declared that they had called this

meeting merely to discuss about the Satyagraha of the untouchables. The people came to know the mischief of the organisers. Therefore, when Shri Waman Joshi proposed the name of Balambhatji for Presidentship 7 to 8 other names were proposed by other people for Presidentship. The reason for proposing many names was the President elected should listen everybody's opinion. Nobody came forward to assure that he will listen everybody. Therefore, getting President for the meeting was found difficult. When such was the situation, Shri Sadasivrao Dharap went to the chair and sat in that chair which was meant for the President. But when people shouted and opposed he left the chair and sat on the floor. When nobody was ready to accept the chairmanship shri Wamanrao Joshi told the people that this meeting has been called to oppose the Satyagraha, those who do not wish to oppose should quit the meeting. On this also there was a quarrelsome debate; shri Tipnis made a suggestion that nobody should quit the meeting. Therefore, nobody left the meeting. Ultimately Shri Waman Joshi had to declare that the meeting has been dissolved. On this one thing is clear that many people in Mahad were on the side of the untouchables. The peoples opinion in general is more important than the some voters in the municipality. 6000 people of Mahad are definitely more important than the 213 voters of the Municipality in this regard.

4. The details of the discussion mentioned above reveals that the people's opinion in Mahad is with us in a big way. Now whatever people that are opposed to the untouchables; move to change that opinion in favour of the untouchables is the moral responsibility of the touchables. This moral responsibility is shouldered by the Brahmin leaders to some extent. But we hear that the Non-Brahmins from the villages are making big preparations for opposing the Satyagraha. In this circumstance it is necessary that the leaders of the Non-Brahmins should have gone to the villages and pacified the people of their caste. If they are unable to visit the villages they should have printed the pamphlets and distributed the same among the villagers. If the Non-Brahmin Party leaders neglect this they will have to repent for this in future. The

opinion of the untouchables will definitely go against this.

5. Today the situation which the untouchables are facing at Mahad the same situation is being faced by the Non-Brahmins at Cheul. As untouchables are prevented from taking water at Mahad similarly at Cheul in the temple of Rameshwar the fishermen, Bhandaris, Agris, Marathas etc. are prevented by the Brahman trustees to go upto the inner part of the temple. The local Non-Brahmin people are agitating against this very seriously. Under the circumstances it is shameful on the part of the Non-Brahmins who are being trodden under the feet of the Brahmins are not coming forward to help the untouchables who are struggling against Brahmanism at Mahad. But what these poor Non-Brahmins will do? Their leaders are deeply involved in making the preparation of celebrating the centenary function of Mahatma Phule. When Satyagraha is going on at Mahad the Non-Brahmin leaders thinking that Brahmanism is being destroyed will sit at home shouting "Mahatma Phule Ki Jai(victory to Mahatma Phule) and their followers by coming to Mahad to protect Brahmanism will raise the slogan "Her Her Mahadev". Those that will come to Mahad will have an occasion to see this funny role of the Non-Brahmin people.

Exchange of Views

Varnashrama Dharma of Mahatma Gandhi

And Social Change

(By T.R.Gosevade, Nagpur)

Once a man understands that he is a human being then he tries to develop the qualities necessary for a human being. But we are not merely made up of blood and flesh but we are the masters of our own mind. When this kind of humanly thought does not enter the mind of man and stay there firmly the slave will not understand that he is a slave, servant will not understand that he is a servant holding a low position and the Sudra will not understand that he is lowest in the social system of four Varnas. But today we find some awakening among the Hindus and some people particularly the lower classes are

making efforts to come out from their lower social status. Mahatma Gandhi is one of the few people who are trying to own the struggle of the untouchables who are struggling for their socio-religious freedom.

Basic Idea of Social Change

The struggle for socio-religious change basically attacks the system of touchable-untouchable and caste distinctions. And hence the mind which has awakened to destroy the socio-religious slavery will also generate the feeling of opposition to these and such a man hates the idea of touchable and untouchable and the birth based idea of high and low. It cannot fit in the idea of God that one man is by birth demeritorious and another man is by birth meritorious. By touch of some people the water and the temples become polluted is an idea which is just unimaginable. The humanity gives importance only to those qualities which man acquires by his own purposeful efforts. Unless a man accepts any profession as a demand of his inner urge his mere heredity of profession is meaningless here. A high position holding man if not properly attentive may fall in his pride of birth only, similarly a low-born individual can rise if he makes determined efforts by developing good qualities in him. This is the theory which disproves the theory of birth-based position of high and low. It depends upon the availability of opportunity to a great extent.

Mahatmaji's Idea of Varnashrama Dharma

It is necessary to see whether Mahatmaji's idea of Varnashrama Dharma supports or opposes the struggles that are going on in the field of socio-religious reforms. To understand this it is necessary to see what is really the Mahatmaji's idea of Varnashrama. Mahatma Gandhi tells about Varnashrama Dharma in his own following words.

“The law of Varna prescribes that a person should for his living follow the lawful occupation of his forefathers or the law of Varna is that that man shall follow the profession of his ancestors for earning his bread.”

This means in order to follow the principles of Varnashrama Dharma one must follow the profession of his ancestors or of his father. In the opinion of Mahatmaji this means that even if somebody from the untouchable community has received the higher education he should also follow the profession of his ancestors for earning his livelihood. It means if somebody's father is doing a profession of carrying the dead animal from the villages he must also do the same profession or if somebody's father is a worker in the mine he must also do the profession of worker in the mines. How strange it is can be easily known by the reader of this argument. An untouchable who has received higher education is misfit to do even a school teacher's job and a man of Brahman caste is qualified to do the same with little educational qualification. This is an injustice beyond any measure. Then what is the meaning of Mahatmaji's assertion do the untouchables have the right to receive education? Had Mahatmaji stopped here only we would have ignored his above assertion. But he states further that if any untouchable accepts the profession of a teacher he should be regarded as a fallen man.

"But he (Sudra) falls from his estate if he tries to gain his livelihood through teaching".

An untouchable by giving up the despising profession if accepts the profession of a teacher he becomes a fallen man is a very strange idea of Mahatmaji who regards himself as the deliverer of the untouchables. If the questions-answers of Mahatmaji during his tour in south printed in Young India of 24th November are read then after reading that anybody doubts whether his thinking can help eradicating untouchability in this country. On the contrary this kind of mad ideas will strengthen the grip of untouchability increasing the sorrow of Mahatmaji. When a question was put to him that why not a man accept the profession which he likes? His answer was "But the only profession after his heart should be the profession of his father." This means that his choice should be "only the profession of his father." Does it not mean that there is an enough scope in the thought of Mahatmaji for the mental slavery of man? In his view if an untouchable has all the

qualities of a Brahmin even then he will not be a Brahmin in this birth.

“He may not be called a Brahmin in this birth. And it is a good thing not to arrogate a Varna to which he is not born. It is a sign of true humility.”

Mahatmaji has not failed in advising the Sudra that his modesty demands that he should behave like a Sudra. However high qualities that a Sudra has acquired he should behave like a Sudra is his modesty. Mahatmaji stands even above Bhalakar* who advocates against inter-dining and inter-caste marriages. As Bhalakar always shows the fear of rebirth similarly the Mahatmaji also by taking the help of the idea of rebirth has tried to solidify the citadel of untouchability. If a Sudra by receiving the modern education tries to take up a teaching profession Gandhiji accuses him for becoming a Brahmin forcibly. According to the idea of Mahatmaji the idea of Varnashrama Dharma is very much advantageous for the attainment of spiritual life. No freedom loving man except Mahatmaji will feel that one should suffer a torturous life of slavery to enjoy spiritual life. In order to derive satisfaction from the world about which we do not know anything there is no harm in suffering the torturous life of socio-religious slavery in this temporal life. The man who advocates this must be either a Mahatma or a beast. The man who has conscience will not hesitate in coming out of slavery that he is suffering in this world, irrespective of whether he gets spiritual happiness or not. The idea of rebirth will never trouble such a man. He will never ready himself to sacrifice the happiness of the temporal life for the sake of his living in other world happily. The Gita says that Chaturvarna system has been devised according to the merit-demerit theory. In spite of this Mahatmaji is adhering to the theory of the birth based merit and demerit. If any opportunity is given the people of lower order can come to the level of the people of higher order. There are such examples before our eyes both in our country as well as the countries outside India. When this is the situation even then Mahatmaji

* Editor of Marathi News Paper "Bhala".

maintains his theory of Varnashrama of old model intact.

All these ideas of Mahatmaji will stand in opposition to the ideas of social change instead of supporting it. The man who will not reject these ideas will never subscribe to the idea of social change. The cool minded people like Mahatmaji will never be helpful in the movement of social change on the contrary they will prove to be the misguiding factor in the movement. Those who wish to revolt against the existing socio-religious slavery must also revolt against naïve and traditional ideas of Mahatmaji. Without this no socio-religious reform movement will go ahead advancing. Leave aside the socio-religious reform even the movement of untouchables for their amelioration cannot march ahead with the help of his ideas. Because by allowing the untouchables to draw water from the public tanks or by allowing them to enter the temples the untouchability cannot be eradicated. It can be done by raising their position up from the division based on birth based merit and demerit. Mahatmaji is not ready to accept their high position in this birth, therefore, the question of his help to their liberation is a ruled out question.

This discussion makes the issue clear that Mahatmaji or the people holding his views are just not capable to help the cause of eradicating untouchability. The future poets must receive encouragement to sing the songs of socio-religious revolution and if it should be the glorious treasure of history then the wise-men of India must come out from the rotten view mentioned above.

The Flood of Sympathy in Words

By : Radhakrishna

After the end of Mughal rule of the Peshwa time the English rule started and since then the rays of education have entered the houses of ignorant people and these rays are suggesting the people to remove the cover of ignorance from them. Hence the people pressed under the burden of tradition began making efforts to receive education. As a matter of fact this should have been done under the indigenous rule(Peshwa rule). But this did not happen because they were hard hearted

people. The Muslims, Portuguese etc. were too much religious minded people. They used to trouble the Hindus. Under the Peshwa rule Hindus harassed the people like Mahars, Chambhars, Mangs etc. and it still goes on to some extent.

What was the need for Bhalakar to say that if the untouchables launch the Satyagraha at Mahad their backs will be hit. Not only this but India which has become eager for self-rule is stranded because of the caste system and the untouchability which is the product of the disease of the caste system. Had the British not stated that remove the caste system and the untouchability and then ask for the, Swarajya, Hindu leaders would not have opened their mouth and uttered the word untouchable even.

It is in a way good fortune that now the olden days extremists who were religiously orthodox have gone and their place has been taken by moderates who are not the staunch opponents of reforms. Its credit does not go to any body but it goes to the changing time. Because if the changing time had not suggested the new ideas, new expectations, and new problems, then it is doubtful how many patriots would have readied themselves to support the anti-untouchability movement? Had the problem of untouchability not stood in the way of Swarajya as a solid rock the touchables would not have prepared themselves to show even their lip-sympathy to the problem of untouchables.

The old environment has changed. Everybody has become conscious of his just rights. Therefore, those who have deprived our human rights and brought us down from the level of human beings are laughing hiding their wicked acts. Using harsh language for such people is quite appropriate. But by abusing Brahmins can we get equal rights? The Brahmins in olden days suppressed others. But will it be appropriate to blame the Brahmins of today for that?

Take These Evidences

By Shivaram Narayan Walawalkar

The untouchables have gained a new insight now. The

wicked minded people by dividing the people into touchables and untouchables have ruined the life of untouchables. But how have the untouchables come to know this. The practice of life of touchables and untouchables is equal in the court of God. It must also be same on the surface of the earth. But it is not so. Hence the untouchables are trying to get their entry into the temples and the water tanks. And the touchables are opposing this efforts of the untouchables. The Mahad episode is the most important episode of our recent times in this connection. There the touchables are preventing the untouchables to draw water from the Chavadar tank. In some other places both the communities are drawing water together and are living in the spirit of love and brotherhood. In Savantwadi state in a village called Walawal there is a big water tank near the temple of God Shri Narayan. In front of Sawantwadi palace also there is a water tank called Moti Talav. In both these tanks touchables and untouchables draw water and take bath very freely. In Malawan Taluka there is a village called Damapur. In this village there is a water tank near the temple of Bhagawati. Here in this tank also both the touchables and the untouchables regularly take bath and wash their clothes. It is from the same tank the water is used for the Bhagawati temple. On the basis of these examples if the touchables of Mahad think about the drawing of water from the tank at Mahad by the untouchables in no way it will harm their orthodox religion.

Collection of Various Subjects

A Public Meeting of Somavamshiya Mahars to Support
Mahar Vatan Bill of Ambedkar Saheb. Place- Dehu,
Dist.- Pune

On 25th Nov. 1927 a meeting took place under the Chairmanship of Shri Jayarambuwa Chavan. By reading the passages from Bahishkrit Bharat Shri Shankarbuwa Chavan Dehukar explained the Mahar Vatan Bill in simple language to the audience. After this the support was given to the Mahar Vatan bill with thunderous applause by raising the slogan of

victory to Ambedkar Saheb. The below mentioned resolutions were unanimously passed in the meeting.

The Mahar Vatan bill which Dr. Ambedkar Saheb has decided to introduce in the Bombay Legislative Assembly is beneficial to the Mahars, hence we unanimously support the bill. After this some people made their speeches in support of the bill. Then they dispersed by giving slogan of victory to Dr. Ambedkar Saheb.

Date: 30-11-27

This kind of public meetings of the Mahars to support Dr. Ambedkar Vatan bill for the abolition of Mahar Vatan to be introduced in Bombay Legislative Assembly were held all over the Bombay Presidency and some of the such public meetings are mentioned here in the Bahishkrit Bharat in the issue of 23rd Dec. 1927. The meetings were held in Karad, Hubli, Satara.

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BAHISHKRIT BHARAT

(Untouchable India)

Friday, 23rd December, 1927

The Economic Basis of the Progress of the Untouchables

On 18th March last there was held a conference of the untouchables at Mahad and the members of the conference in order to establish their rights went to the Chavadar tank at Mahad and drank the water. It is because of this the conference has become immortal in the history of the untouchables in their

progress. Because the local touchables were determined to prevent the untouchables from taking water from the tank. On this the leaders of the conference immediately declared that the Mahad episode is like Panipat for us and we will not stop without capturing it. And they took a oath that if time comes we will resort to Satyagraha and accomplish our work, they declared.

When the news of this determination was spread some touchables there tried to advise the untouchables. Immediately there was a reaction of Chitrav Shastri who said that the agitators at Mahad must take into account the difference in the numerical strength between the touchables and the untouchables. He further said that in Marathi speaking area at least the touchables are $\frac{3}{4}$ th and untouchables are $\frac{1}{4}$ in their population. There may be differences among the touchables but they are fully united as far as the untouchables are concerned. This is seen at Mahad very often. And the untouchables for their subsistence are completely dependent on the touchables. The day on which the untouchables will be independent for earning their livelihood that day will be quite different not only for the untouchables but also for the whole of India because it is that which will make them ready for the demand of human rights. The Editor of a weekly paper in Bombay has also expressed the similar opinion. He said,

Satyagraha is a very sweet word to hear. But it is a double-edged weapon. On the strength of Satyagraha Dr. Ambedkar will drink the water of Chavadar tank of Mahad along with his followers but when its reaction starts showing itself in villages there the untouchables will face the miserable situation. Who will be responsible for this? Does doctor Saheb think that if the Satyagraha is successful at one or two places it will solve the problem of the entire untouchable community all over the country? We are of the firm opinion that the result of the Satyagraha launched by Dr. Saheb will be the bloodshed.

This is the danger light that touchables of this province

are showing to the untouchables. Similar danger signs are shown by the touchables at Amravati to the untouchables who are planning to enter the temple of Amravati. This has been reported by the paper 'Swarajya' of Puna. In the month of last October there was a public meeting of the touchables on the ground of Hanuman gymnasium at Amravati. In the meeting the touchables issued a threat to the untouchables that they are poor and dependent upon others and if they by injuring the feelings of touchables and by issuing the threats to them try to attain their objective the touchables will stop their aids to them and bring them to their terms.

Wealth is the essential thing in bringing about the prosperity in the country. Hence the storing of the wealth is most essential. But when the wealthy people utilise their wealth to keep the poor people under their absolute control and establish their supremacy over them this arrests their progress. This attitude of the wealthy people has been called as monstrous by the wise people. The people who are advising this science of morality to us also accept this as worth accepting. In a city like Bombay when there is a quarrel between the owner and the workers these shrewd people tell the workers that they should take care otherwise the owners will declare boycott against the workers and take away their means of livelihood. They tender this kind of advice to the workers who are ready to go on strike. Our question to these middlemen is that if it is irreligious to misuse the wealth against those who are struggling for their economic freedom then is it proper to use wealth against those who are struggling for their social freedom? Since you have taken the responsibility of advising us then why do you not tell the party opposing us that with the power of wealth suppressing us is irreligious? Had they done this it would have shown the purity of their heart. But they have not done that, instead they have merely warned the untouchables for the consequences. We feel that it is their poisonous instigation. Because when somebody is ashamed of condemning the act openly he does it using the garb of advice. We are not that unwise in not understanding their tactics. Their aim is to reveal it to the touchables about the

weapon they wield against the agitating untouchables. perhaps these hypocrites do not know that the untouchables have already thought over the consequences that their Satyagraha will produce and they are fully prepared to meet the eventuality. Who is afraid of such threats? Only those who are not firm in their faith and conviction. Those who have no aims alone are afraid of these threats. We know that if our aim is very high the efforts required to attain it should also be almost sacrificial. History has no testimony that high aims are attained without supreme sacrifice. If there is any difference between man and animal it is man's thinking ability. This is a gift of nature to man alone. The untouchables are awakened people. A time was to come for the untouchables to chose for good living and equality. That time has come now. The untouchables have decided to secure the status of equality first. And it is for this they have decided to do every thing rather to sacrifice every thing to get the status of equality. Touchables are free to raise the barrier of boycott against the untouchables. They will not bother for their Boycott Against Satyagraha should not be a matter of worry for us. Because nobody can take up the self-destructive weapon like boycott in his hands. If anybody uses it will be quite temporary. As untouchables assert that they do not accept, similarly the English people assert that the touchables who demand Swarajya are not yet fit for Swarajya. As the touchables are trying to resort to boycott against the untouchables who are resorting to Satyagraha against the touchables the same touchables had also declared their boycott against the English clothes and this had continued for many years. But their boycott against the English goods has not disturbed the British government even a slightest possible way. The reason is quite clear. Where the mutual economic relation is like the giver and accepter there the boycott can work. Because if the giver declares boycott against the accepter the donor does not suffer in any way. But where the mutual relations are of exchange nature the boycott cannot work. Had it been so then the mill owners would have permanently boycotted the workers. When the owner maintains the workers

he tells them that he helps them but the workers can also tell him that they also help him. The work that an individual can do by himself for that he need not employ anybody but the work that he is unable to do for that only he has to employ somebody. Therefore, both are inseparably interdependent on each other and they do not disturb their mutual relations normally. Therefore, the touchables should not boast that they are maintaining the untouchables. Both need the services of each other. Therefore, the threat of boycott of the touchables against the untouchables is only a temporary phase, it cannot last long.

Though the mutual economic relations are interdependent there is some difference in their mutual standing. The untouchables are absolutely beneficial to the touchables whereas touchables are more harmful than beneficial in their relations with the untouchables. If there comes an occasion of quarrel between the two the untouchables who are poor and in minority are handicapped against the touchables who are economically well off and numerically in a big majority. Under such circumstances it is necessary to think how the untouchables will become

Self-Supporting

First of all we must take into account the castes among the untouchables that will suffer under the boycott of the touchables. Two castes, Chambhar and Dhor, are professional castes. The boycott of the touchables will not make any effect on them. On the contrary if they tell the touchables that they will not provide new shoe pairs to them and will not repair the old shoes the touchables will face the problems. Similarly the people of Mang caste are also professional. If they refuse to provide ropes and brooms the touchables will have some problems. Because these two commodities are needed most for every purpose. Therefore, the boycott against the Mangs is not profitable to the touchables. On the contrary these can successfully declare boycott against the touchables. The scavengers are another untouchable caste. If the touchables declare boycott against them they can bring the touchables

within no time to their senses. Though their profession is regarded as low their services are most essential to the society. If the scavengers declare boycott the society will be the kingdom of diseases, filth and dirt. Now what is the position of Mahars? The Mahars have no profession of their own. They are the people in the government service though their position is the lowest there. It is the government service on which they earn their livelihood. The people in the government service have no fear of boycott. The Mahars can say this but when? They are capable to say that only when they are responsible only to the government and to none else. But today for their misfortune they cannot say that. The main reason of the misfortune of the Mahars is their Vatan. It is because of their Vatan the Mahars have become the slaves of the touchables. The touchables are their masters because the Mahars have to work under the officers who are all touchables. These officers do not extract only the government work from the Mahars but they see that whether the Mahars are submissive and subservient in their behaviour. If the Mahars violate this rule they are severely punished by the officers. There are innumerable examples of punishing the Mahars if they fail to cut the wood to be used for cooking purpose in the house of village Patil; if they do not provide fodder for the horse of Mamlatdar, if they do not till the land of village Kulkarni; if they do not salute the Rayats; if they give up begging bread from the Rayats; if they stop eating the flesh of the dead animals; they are beaten. These things and the government services have no relation of any kind. Had Musalman or a Parsee been a Patil or Kulkarni the Mahar Vatan would have been a blessing for the Mahars. They would have punished the Mahars only when they evaded the work, not because he wore the good clothes or gave up begging the bread, or he gave up eating the flesh of the dead animals. Because the maintaining cleanliness or wearing good clothes by the Mahars is an insult only to the touchable Hindus. The Non-Hindus will not think that by maintaining cleanliness the Mahars have become arrogant. It is because of this the Mahars have to remain always submissive to the touchable Hindus. Thus the Vatan is the cause of his fall. He has to accept almost the position of a

slave in his relation with the touchable Hindus. The Vatan has made them dependent on touchable Hindus. The Mahars as Vatan holding servants are the servants of the government but they do not get their emoluments from the government they get it from the Rayats. Therefore, they have become in reality the servants of the Rayats perpetually. The emoluments that Mahars get from the Rayats is called Baluta. If the Rayats are displeased with Mahars for some reason they stop paying the Baluta to the Mahars. This weapon is very often used by the touchables. They use it even for some minor mistake of the untouchables. This way the Mahars have become almost the slaves of the touchables due to their Vatan-holding. If the Mahars are to get relieved of it then they must secure their economic freedom. Therefore, our argument is that first of all reform the Vatan system. The reform is that the Vatan lands of the Mahars should be with them by converting the land into Rayatava land by imposing land revenue tax as other lands of the Rayats are taxed and they should be freed from their other work that they do under the Vatan system. This will free them at once from the burden of their Vatan to which they are hereditarily bound for ages together. This will give them economic freedom. If this is not possible then they should be freed from the work of the Rayats and made them government's paid workers. On our suggestion some Mahars argue that how should they sustain themselves if the Vatan work is given up? Our answer is that the men do not bring profession with their birth. It is only after birth he selects some work and sustains himself by doing that work. Then why should the Mahars not do that? However we are making some suggestions as remedies for their economic freedom. Our first suggestion to the Mahars is that they should

Make Their Separate Colonies

The Mahars are very much proud of their villages. Leaving their village where they have been hereditarily living is their big problem. Dying there where ancestors died is regarded as his duty by the Mahar. Had the Mahars been treated well in the village their pride for their village would have been understandable. But the village where they are regarded as

rubbish; for minor reasons the touchables prevent their entry into the village; abusing them by the touchables is quite common in the villages there the desire to linger on is a shameless act. Such treatment to the Mahars in the village is quite common everywhere. In Sholapur district the atrocities against the Mahars are going on in the villages like Masnur, Ratanjan, Raleras, Pangaon, Surdi, Malavandi, Chikharde, Kasegaon, Shirbavi etc. and this has already been published in our paper 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. The touchables of some above mentioned villages have decided to drive out the untouchables from their villages. The Mahars are finding it difficult to face such calamities. Because they are in an absolute minority in every village, almost less than $\frac{1}{4}$ th total population of the touchables in each village. Hence to escape from the clutches of the touchable ruffians they should quit their respective villages and make their separate colony by setting up there. They should settle in a forest area where the land for cultivation will also be available. This will be a good substitute to their Vatan. The untouchables quitting from the villages or so can form a group and settle at a new place. Here they can earn their livelihood by doing any profession of their choice because they are the free people there. This is one advantage. Another advantage of forming the separate colony is that their children will be born in a free social atmosphere of no social discrimination. The children that will grow in new colony will not know the practice of untouchability nor will they know anything like the idea of purity and impurity. The social atmosphere will not make them mentally weak. But for establishing these new colonies we need help from two agencies (1) Help from the government (2) the Mahars must prepare themselves to quit their villages. Of these two the help from the government is not that difficult. In Mysore princely state it has been decided that by giving 7 acres of land to each untouchable family they should be settled in a separate area. In our area also the British government has decided to settle the Berads in a separate area. Hence the government will not say no to accept the same scheme in case of Mahars also. The real question is whether the Mahars will prepare themselves to quit their villages and go to settle in a separate colony?

But it is difficult to get such a big area where all Mahars will subsist on cultivation of land. Hence it is necessary that they should undertake some other professions also. The Mahars are not a professional community. They will have to do whatever work is available to them. They can work to produce Khadi cloth (home-made cloth) and sell it. On this they may think that who will purchase the cloth woven by them? And if it is not purchased by anybody then what is the use of producing it. This question is very easy to solve. The Mahars should decide to use only the cloth produced by them. Such a big population of Mahars can absorb any amount of cloth. This is the remedy for Mahars freedom from the Rayats.

The Conference of the Solapur District Vatan Holding Mahars, Solapur

Session 2nd

(From our Special Correspondent)

The donation of Rs. 445 to the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha

As per the earlier decision the second session of the conference of Solapur Vatan holding Mahars was held on 26th and 27th November under the chairmanship of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. The people from every village of the Solapur district had come for the conference. On Saturday the 26th November, people began gathering in a big crowd from 5 p.m. They were all very eagerly waiting for the arrival of Dr. Ambedkar. Exactly at 7 p.m. Dr. Ambedkar Saheb arrived with his other lieutants. The people stood up and welcomed him with thunderous clapping. A welcome song was sung in his honour and then shri Jivappa Aidale, the Chairman of the Reception Committee began the work of the conference. He made the following welcome speech.

Brothers and sisters on this auspicious day I extend my warm welcome to you from the bottom of my heart. After seeing this holy occasion the Mahar brothers of Solapur must have felt very much happy as I have felt. We must be grateful to the almighty god because of whose blessings we are seeing this occasion. Brothers after seeing your serene faces we have

become absolutely purified. By facing hardship in the journey you have come from the distant places and graced this conference. In fact we are not qualified to welcome you properly. There was a very little time at our disposal to make preparation of the conference. Hence there are some shortcomings in the arrangements. We hope that you will bear our shortcomings.

We were doubtful whether this conference will go well because the Mahars of Solapur have no experience of organising this kind of conference. But the people like Shri Vishvanathbuwa Bandsode, Shri Torne a school teacher, Shri Udhavarao Shivasharan (teacher) took serious interest and worked hard to make this conference successful. Besides these Mahar members there were others who helped the conference to make it successful. Notable among them were:

- (1) Shri S.N.Kotnis, Vice-president, Solapur Municipality
 - (2) Shri V.Vadepalli
 - (3) Shri K.R. Oak, Health Officer
 - (4) Mr. Karwarn
 - (5) Shri Manikchand Ramchand Shah
 - (6) Shri Revanshidappa Salgar
 - (7) Shri Sardeshmukh, Sanitary Inspector
- And others.

Our thanks are due to these dignitaries.

Brothers, today is an auspicious day but for some special reason this day has become a very delightful and holy day. It is due to the availability of Dr. Ambedkar Saheb as the President of this conference. In spite of his multifarious activities in which he is involved he made himself available for this conference and chaired it. This reveals his urge for social reform and his dutifulness towards poor and suppressed people. His study of the problems of these people and the remedies that he suggests to solve the problem are very appropriate. Due to the efforts of Dr. Saheb the untouchable community will definitely go ahead following the path of progress.

Brothers due to the rule of equality loving English people no body's rights are suppressed here generally. Since this is the order of English rule all the ways of our progress are open for us. This is our general understanding of the British rule in India. But when we see that the Hindus behaving irreligiously in the name of religion and follow the artificially created social inequality we feel that the equality loving English rulers find that there are thorns spread by the Hindus in the path of implementing the idea of equality. The inhuman injustice like the practice of untouchability is just ignored by the religious and political leaders of the Hindus. The Hindu leaders feel for some injustice done to the Indians in Transwal-Kenya but they cannot see the cruel injustice done to the untouchable brothers in India. The public facilities should be equally available to all the people is the view of the English people but in case of public wells and tanks if water is drawn by the untouchables they are severely beaten by the caste Hindus. When this is the outlook of the caste Hindus how can then they ameliorate our condition? The caste Hindus in whose house and religion a dirt like untouchability is spread; in whose thinking and action there is no consistency such people will never succeed in bringing the Hindus converted to other religions back to Hinduism.

Brothers, the people of many nations in the world are struggling to forge ahead in the race of progress. Under the blessings of British rule in India we too have the opportunity to participate in the race of progress. A learned jewel like Dr. Ambedkar Saheb is available to lead us. He is a guiding light for our community. We suffer in social, economic and religious life at every step and endure the humiliation wherever we go. Fatalism is our enemy. We must discard the old notion that the fate decides everything. So long as the untouchability remains as the blood stigma of our life the so called untouchables will never revolt against their untouchability.

Then after the end of the first day meeting another meeting took place in the same pandal on the same day under the Chairmanship of Shri Seth Manek Chand Shaha to support the Mahar Vatan reform Bill introduced by Dr. Ambedkar

Saheb in Bombay Legislative Assembly. In the meeting the following resolution was unanimously passed.

“This conference of the Vatan holding Mahars wholeheartedly supports the Mahar Vatan Reform Bill which Dr. Ambedkar Saheb has introduced in the Bombay Legislative Assembly.”

After this the request was made to Dr. Ambedkar Saheb to explain the Bill that he has introduced. After this request Dr. Ambedkar Saheb explained the Bill in a nutshell in most simple language. The people understood it thoroughly and shouted the slogan “Victory to Dr. Ambedkar Saheb.” Then the resolution was unanimously passed.

Next day which was Sunday they met for second day proceedings. The conference was presided over by Dr. Ambedkar, the conference passed the following resolutions.

- (1) It is the considered opinion of this assembly that setting aside the theory of merit and action of Geeta and accepting the birth based caste system the Hinduism has damaged its fortunes beyond repair. Therefore this conference suggests the leaders of Hinduism that they should immediately discard the idea of Chaturvarna and take up the work of producing one Varna of the Hindus by reconstructing the Hindu society. If the delaying tactics are adopted in this matter then the untouchables who have been suppressed under the Chaturya Varna system will have to think whether they should consider the alternative like converting to some other religion.
- (2) This conference thinks that the temple of Vithoba of Pandharpur should be open to the untouchables. If there is a need the untouchables should launch the Satyagraha there also to seek the entry into the temple of God Vithoba.
- (3) This conference is of the opinion that in order to get the grievances of the Vatan holding Mahars redressed there should be formed a Union of Mahar Vatan holders for each district. Accordingly by establishing a union for Solapur district the union is authorised to collect Rs. 5 from each

village in the district. The union will be consisted of following persons.

Solapur Taluka - Vishwanath Meghaji Bansode

Pandharpur Taluka - Bapu Ailuni Sarvagod

Karmale Taluka - Govind Gopal Kamble

Malsiras Taluka - Talyaba Pandurang Savant

Sangola Taluka - Chokha Sidu Kate

Madhe Taluka - Piraji Mariba Sarvade

Barsi Taluka - Sakharam Mahadu Bokephode

Solapur City - Jivappa Subhanrao Aidale

Secretary - Haribhau Torne

The above appointed people are authorised to prepare the rules of governing and the rules prepared by them should be placed before the next meeting for approval. The next meeting should be summoned at least within two years.

- (4) The municipal cities like Solapur and Pandharpur and the villages like Ratanjan, Kari, Degaon etc. are the places where the lands of the Mahars have been included in the common pastures called Gayaran, of the village. This conference urges the Collector that the land of the Mahars be restored to them.
- (5) The villages in which the Mahars have no Vatan land there they should be given the land either from the forest land or from the uncultivated barren land.
- (6) At the instigation of Patil and Kulkarni the Rayats of following villages have decided to drive the Mahars away from their respective villages. The villages are Belapur, Masnur, Raleras, Pangaon, Chikharde, Kosagaon, Chakure, Shikhavi, Medad, Dahigaon, Bhamburdi, Ratanjan, Surdi, Gursale(Taluka Malsiras), and Lonand.

The government should enquire into the matter of these villages and give protection to the Mahars of above mentioned villages is the urging demand of this organisation.

- (7) In this Solapur district in which village the Mahars have no Vatani land there the government should give the lands to the Mahars from the barren and forest lands. This is the request that this organisation makes to the government.
- (8) This conference of Mahars of Solapur District feels that to end the economic slavery of Mahars this conference should establish the co-operative society of Mahars in each district. Spinning and cloth-making can be undertaken through these co-operative societies and similarly the co-operative agricultural colonies should be established.
- (9) This organisation is of the opinion that the government before considering the application of others for land allotment the applications of the untouchables should be considered first. If the untouchables accept the condition of the government the priority should go to them while the government allotting the barren and forest land.

All these above mentioned resolutions were unanimously passed. Then after thanks giving the meeting ended with slogan, victory to Dr. Ambedkar.

Condolence Meeting

At Kolaba Dandi in Bombay a condolence meeting on the death of Balasaheb Ambedkar, the brother of Dr. Ambedkar Saheb, took place in untouchables' chawl on 26-11-27. Shri Kond-deva, Shri Ram Kholwadikar presided. Almost one thousand people – men and women, had gathered for the meeting. The following resolutions were passed in the meeting.

- (A) This meeting deeply mourns the death of Balasaheb Ambedkar, the brother of our national leader Dr. Ambedkar.
- (B) The death of his brother has made Dr. Ambedkar very much sad and sorrowful. We the people of entire Maharashtra share his sorrow and request him that he should resist his sorrowful feelings.

Yours

Dhondiba Mahadeo Jadhav

Public Meeting for Securing the Aid For Mahad Satyagraha

On 3-12-27 a public meeting under the chairmanship of Dr. Ambedkar was held in St. George Hospital. Shri Devrao Naik, Shri Pradhan, Shri Gangavane, Shivatarkar etc. addressed the meeting. Then Dr. Ambedkar explained the entire issue of Satyagraha in a very simple language.

In the meeting the workers of St George hospital donated Rs. 101; the workers of Kama Hospital Rs. 17 and others Rs. 6. In all an amount of Rs. 134 was the total collection for the purpose of proposed Satyagraha at Mahad.

On 4-12-27 a huge public meeting of the untouchables took place in Damodar Hall, Poyabawadi, Bombay. A learned jewel and the leader of the untouchables Dr. Ambedkar presided over the meeting. A huge public had gathered for the meeting. In the meeting the workers of the untouchables like Shri Kholwadikar, Ganapatbuwa Jadhav and Shri Shivatarkar and the touchable members like Shri Chitre, Shri Bala master, Shri Potanis and Shri Pradhan made forceful speeches and explained the need for Mahad Satyagraha again. Some people registered their names for participating the Satyagraha. In the same meeting some people gave donation for the purpose of Satyagraha and the donations are as below:

- (1) Nayagaon B D D Chawl Rs. 101
- (2) Shivadi Kabarsthan Rs. 11
- (3) Paral Sakarbai Petit Hospital Rs. 13
- (4) Poyabawadi Trombay Company Chawl Rs. 14
- (5) Poyabawadi no. 6 Cement Chawl Rs. 14
- (6) Poyabawadi Cement Chawl Rs. 91
- (7) Curry Road B D D Chawl Rs. 43
- (8) Madanpura Industrial Trust Chawl Rs. 19 and 12 annas
- (9) Ramdas Jiwanddas Mathawankar Rs. 5
- (10) Shivaram Narayan Walawalkar Rs. 4

(11) Govind Nivakar Rs. 10

(12) Bala Master Rs. 5

The total collection was Rs. 330 and 12 annas.

Public Meeting on Behalf of the People of Bara Pakhadi, Pali, Danda Road & Bandre

On Sunday dated 11-12-27 at 4 in the evening there was a public meeting at Bandra under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar for the sake of Satyagraha at Mahad. A beautiful pandal was erected for the meeting. About thousand people had gathered for the meeting. Dr. Ambedkar Volunteer Corps raised by Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha was specially brought there to look after the arrangement of the meeting. From railway station to the place of the meeting Dr. Ambedkar and other guests were brought in a car. The meeting started as soon as the guests reached the place of the meeting. After the start of the meeting the following resolution was read out.

“We the people of Bara Pakhadi of Bandar are giving Rs. 175 as donation to the Satyagraha that is going to commence from 25th December under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar at Mahad. We also request the people that have gathered here that they should also help by donating as much money as they can for the cause of Satyagraha. They then gave the donation of Rs. 175 to Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar thanked them for the donation and made the following speech.”

He said, “Gentleman, I thank you very much for the donation which you have given for the purpose of Satyagraha at Mahad. The people who have gathered here today if they look back to their ancestors they will have to hang their head in shame. At Dapoli in Konkan there were Palatial buildings of Subhedars, Jamadars, Havalgars etc. but those buildings have been destroyed by the Musalmans. You should think why this has happened. East India Company came here and established its rule with the help of our people. So long as our people were in the military the prosperity of our people continued. And when the doors of military services were closed

for our people our condition went on declining. Today there is no entry of our people in police services. The entry in other services is also not that easy for our people. In Poona, there is a boy in our community who is a graduate degree holder. I am struggling for the last two years to secure a job for him. You have given money for Mahad Satyagraha. This does not mean that your work is over. We are launching Satyagraha at Mahad only because that the touchables think us as born impure and not because we do not get water. It is only to show to the touchable Hindus that we are equal with them. The people need not worry. Nothing untoward will happen there. Therefore, you should all be ready to exercise your right there. You should fearlessly participate in the Satyagraha is my request to you.

Then the people donated Rs. 276 and annas 14 in all and the meeting was over.

The Names of the People Participating In the Mahad Satyagraha

The Village Chandave, Taluka Mahad

- (1) Tukaram Bhiku
- (2) Jayaram Navji
- (3) Laxman Navji
- (4) Gopal Bhiku
- (5) Thatre Bhiva
- (6) Genu Laxman
- (7) Bhiku Sakharam
- (8) Vithal Sakharam
- (9) Gopal Shiva
- (10) Dhondur Bapu
- (11) Sudkya Bhagu
- (12) Bhagya Babaji
- (13) Sonu Bapu
- (14) Kalya Bapu

(15) Balu Bhagu

(16) Deu Rayaji

Village Haldul, Tal. Mahad

(1) Dharma Ganuji More

(2) Babu Raju

(3) Panguji Pandu More

(4) Dhondu Pawar

(5) Bhau Malu More

(6) Gauru Sajanaji Pawar

(7) Hari Sonu Modsalkar

(8) Sakarya Raju Modsalkar

(9) Shelar

(10) Sonavane

(11) Amruta Nanaji Jadhav

(12) Gopal Motiram Jadhav

(13) Chimaji Kasiram Jadhav

(14) Mahadu Ganaji Jadhav

(15) Bhiku Ananda Jadhav

(16) Tukaram Kanu Jadhav

(17) Sayajirao Sakharam

(18) Laxman Vithu Salve

(19) Pandurang Tukaram Gayakwad

The Village Poladpur, Tal. Mahad

(1) Malu Gavaru

(2) Budhya Balu

(3) Devaji Gavaru

(4) Gangaram Ananda

(5) Vithu Chima

(6) Ganapati Namaji

(7) Subhanya Devakya Vanalkar

(8) Laxman Babaji

(9) Gavarya Babaji

- (10) Budhya Bhiva
- (11) Vithu Devaji
- (12) Balu Janu
- (13) Kanu Lakhu
- (14) Rama Deu
- (15) Khanda Balu Dhavelkar
- (16) Balu Bhiva Karanjekar
- (17) Sagu Navaji Wakankar
- (18) Dhondu Ganu Wakankar
- (19) Bhiku Dhoma Pawar
- (20) Chandrya Ananda
- (21) Dagadu Laxman
- (22) Bhiku Hiru
- (23) Vithal Kanya
- (24) Babya Hari
- (25) Ragho Nand
- (26) Dharma Dhondu
- (27) Vithu Chima
- (28) Sakya Moru

Village Kondvi, Tal. Mahad

- (1) Babaji Ragho
- (2) Govind Kasiram
- (3) Ramji Bhiva
- (4) Lakhu Ragho
- (5) Sudhya Rama
- (6) Chimaji Babu
- (7) Deu Zilu
- (8) Janu Gangaram
- (9) Changu Balu
- (10) Babu Ganu
- (11) Vithu Saya
- (12) Gavarya Bhiku Kolwalkar

Reporting from Mahad
Public Meeting Summoned at Mahad
By the citizens but dissolved without Transaction

To the Editor Bahishkrit Bharat,

On 17th November, 1927 a meeting of the citizens of Mahad was summoned and the news of this meeting was circulated by the priest of the Vireshwar temple. The meeting was called at 5 p.m. to discuss about the Satyagraha of the untouchables to be launched at Mahad on 26th, Dec. 1927 at the Chavadar Tank. The meeting was attended by almost 700 to 800 people. Shri Wamanrao Joshi told the people that had gathered the cause of summoning the meeting. He said that the untouchables are launching the Satyagraha and to oppose their Satyagraha this meeting has been called. He suggested the name of Shri Bal Bhatji for Presidentship of the meeting. After hearing the purpose of summoning the meeting the people expressed their differences in their views. Shri Chunilal Mehta said that the purpose of the meeting was not communicated to us. On the contrary it was stated that the meeting was called to think about the Satyagraha. He opposed the name of Shri Bal Bhatji for Presidentship. He was supported by Shri Bapurao Joshi. After this Shri Vasudev Oak stood up and made a suggestion that since the President will not be in position to do the work an additional President should be there and he suggested the name of Shri Bandopant Joshi, a lawyer, for additional Presidentship. This suggestion produced laughter and confusion. Shri Oak was ridiculed in the meeting. The surprising thing is that Shri Oak is considered as well-versed in rules and regulation and he is a school teacher, his suggestion was objected by Shri Surendranath Tipnis and Shri Bapurao Joshi. Shri Pitambar Bhai Gujar should preside over the meeting was the suggestion made by Shri Tipnis. But Shri Pitambar Bhai for some reason did not accept the offer. After this there was much confusion in the meeting. Almost 7 to 8 names were suggested for Presidentship. There were supporters and opponents to these names. The reason for opposition was that the man who becomes Chairman must hear the arguments of

both the sides. The surprising thing was that none among the suggested person was ready to accept this view and become the Chairman. As a matter of fact the meeting was of all the citizens and among them some may be the supporters of untouchables and some may be opposed to their Satyagraha. The names that were suggested were of Brahmins only. One among them was Shri Dharap, a pleader. Shri Dharap without bothering for the opposition came forward and sat in the Chair of the President. The people opposed him but he said that his name was proposed and also was seconded and hence he was elected by the people. The argument was that without knowing the argument of both the parties no one should accept the Chairmanship. But Shri Dharap was not willing to accept this point of view. After seeing that he is opposed by many he left the Chair and sat in the public. Here the Brahmin strategy was that get the resolution passed that the people at Mahad are opposed to the Satyagraha and send the resolution to the government and get the preventive order issued from government for the Satyagraha that was to start on 25-12-27.

This way nobody in the meeting was ready to become the Chairman of the meeting. Then Shri Wamanrao Joshi(pleader) said that this meeting was summoned to get the resolution opposing to Satyagraha passed. Those who are opposed to the resolution should quit the meeting. This suggestion of Shri Joshi was very sharply opposed and many became angry with him. They said that this meeting belongs to all the citizens therefore, Shri Surba Tipnis said that the resolution of a few people cannot be the resolution of many. After hearing him nobody left the meeting. Then Shri Wamanrao Joshi after seeing that his proposal was defeated he sat down but he again said that this meeting is dissolved and another meeting will be called again. On this Shri Tipnis said that when the meeting will be called again the people should be vigilant while expressing their opinion for or against.

This way the meeting which continued for two hours ended in confusion without taking any decision.

The Merciless Beating of An Untouchable Family

Writer — An untouchable

If there is any country in which the religious suppression continues it is India. The religious trouble that the untouchables undergo in India has no parallel in any other country of the world. Injustice whether it is religious or political when it becomes intolerable it generates resistance. The people who suffer try to go away from such religion or politics. This is the common experience of the people everywhere. The untouchables who are Hindus are not allowed to follow the practices of Hinduism. This is the shamelessness on the part of the high caste Hindus. When we see the condition of Hinduism in relation to the injustice done to the untouchables we feel that the condition of Hinduism is not comfortable. Once upon a time Hinduism was one of the leading religions of the world but today it is trailing behind. Untouchables inspite of all injustices have clung to Hinduism. The touchable are prepared to do anything to safeguard their selfish interests but are not caring for the slavery of the untouchables. The members of the Hindu Maha Sabha or Hindu Sanghatan do not pay their attention to this problem. See the following example:

One Shri Doma Kanhu Gedam of village Chimur Tal. Varoda, Dist. Chanda (now Chandrapur) is a follower of Mahanubhav sect.* To have a sight of the deity of his sect he went to Ridhpur a holy place of the Mahanubhav sect which is in Taluka Morsi and District Amravati. There he went upto the steps of the temple, burnt the Camphor, bowed to the deity from there only. When he was about to return there came a priest and said to that man (Gedan), "Are you going by burning Camphor?, do you know that you have to give some Dakshina (monetary help) of Rs. 2?" Gedan became helpless and told the priest he does not have 2 rupees and then he started going.

Then the priest told the head priest that this man who is a Mahar by caste had gone inside the temple. On that head priest

*Mahanubhav is a Maharashtrian medieval religious sect which believes in casteless society.

became furious and beat that poor man severely until he collapsed there only by fainting. His wife and children ran away from there. But the priests caught hold of them also, brought them back and beat them severely. The boy's head started bleeding due to injury. The members of the Hindu Sabha and Hindu Sanghatan met and discussed the event at Amravati but here the poor man fell fainted at Rithpur, the centre of Mahanubhav sect. This Mahar was the follower of the Mahanubhav sect. He got the befitting experience of the sect now. Let the Mahar be in any sect an injustice to him is his fait accompli. Hinduism which is surviving somehow would not have survived had the untouchables left it. Why should the government not prevent the injustices done to the untouchables at such places?

Satyagraha at Mahad

Suggestion of Non-Brahmin leaders

There is going to be a Satyagraha at Mahad on 25th December, 1927. On that occasion how should our Maratha brothers and other Hindus behave is our subject of discussion.

The practice of untouchability is very much wrong. The God is in everybody and this has been shown by our saints like Eknath and others by their speech and action. All men are the children of God and treating some as low is sinful act is the message of Mahatma Phule. The people have seen how Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur behaved with Mahars, Mangs etc. with perfect equality. Shri Chhatrapati Rajaram his successor at Kolhapur is also behaving in the same way with untouchables.

What is the opinion of the Brahmins in this connection has been made clear in the Brahmins conference held at Akola. It has been resolved there that all the castes among the Hindus are equal and all the caste people have the right to use Vedic rituals. This means that the Mahars, Mangs etc. have their equal rights with other Hindus even in matters of Vedic rites.

The occasion of Mahad Satyagraha shows that the religious

books, justice and law are all opposed to the practice of untouchability. Untouchability must be destroyed is the declaration of Mahatma Gandhi and all other leaders like the Marathas and Non-Marathas also unanimously help the untouchables in their struggle at Mahad and earn fame all over the country. Shri Shiv Chhatrapati established his Hindupad Padshahi on Rayagad fort which is in Mahad Taluka. The people of all castes including the Mahars were there in his army. The present generation of Chhatrapati does not observe untouchability. Under the circumstances the people of Mahad must stand in support of the untouchables. May God bless all with good conscience and help grow the love and brotherhood among them.

Your Sincerely,

Bhaskar Vithojirao Jadhav- Mahadkar
Ramchandra Santuram Asavale
Dinkarrao Shankar Javalkar
Ramchandra Vithalrao Vandekar
Vijayi Maratha 19-12-27

News Summary

Publically Inter-dining

On 13-12-27 in the temple of Arya Samaj at Amravati there took place a programme of inter-dining, almost 60 people both touchables and untouchables participated in it. In that the untouchables[Mahars, Chambhars, Mangs and Bhangis(scavengers)] were in majority. An untouchable social worker Shri Sampatrao Naik made special efforts in organising this programme. This is worth remembering that those who supported the eradication of caste system from the platform of the Hindu Sabha in Nagpur and belong to the organisation of Hindu Sanghatan did not participate in this programme of inter-dining. Similarly some Kshatriyas who often abuse the Brahmins as wicked people also did not attend stating that they had some urgent work to do elsewhere. Those who attended the programme of inter-dining their names are given below.

Mahars

(1)S.G.Naik ,(2) V.M.Ogale (3) G.S.Gadge (4) S.R.Ingole (5) Visoba Narayan Rao (6) Rajaram Bangad (7) D.G.Wankhade (8) S.V.Gurjar(9) P.H.Tayade(10) Y.S.Khandekar(11) R.A. Gaikwad (12)Rajaram(13) Mahol (14) Dhok (15) S.P. Dhandar(16) T.S.Dhok (17) J.P. Wankhede (18) Punamihu (19) Paranu (20) Marotrao (21) I.P.Dhok

Chambhars

(1) C.S.Ingle (2) Bote (3) N.K.Gavai (4)K.P.Ingle (5) J.S.Ingle

Mangs

(1) Ganoba Gavai (2)Parshram Gaikwad (3) Mahadeo Khandare (4) Ganapatrao Ingole (5)Phatu Lakhuji Tayade (6) Bhiku Jondhale (7) Ganapatrao (8) Anandrao Janaba

Bhangi (Scavengers)

- (1) Mannalal
- (2) Kallu

Touchables

(1)S.D. Randive, Pleader (2) V.B.Chaubal (3) G.B.Chaubal (4) D.P.Dixit (5) Panjabrao Barrister (6) M.R.Bagave Barrister (7) Jairam Patil (8) Mahod Master (9) Uttamrao Kadam (10) Dabholkar Master (11) D.J.Chavan (12) Hanmantrao (13) S.V. Gokhale, Pleader (14) S.S.Ketkar, pleader (15)Dr. Bhagwat (16) Dr. Sabnis (17) Barr. I.N.Joshi (18) Joglekar, Pleader (19) P.Y.Deshpande (20) Dr. Shridharpant Bhat (21) Raghunathrao Saranjame, pleader (22)Dr. Patvardhan (23) Jog, Pleader (24) Vaijanath Oak, Pleader (25) Paithankar (26) Murlidhar Oak, Pleader (27) L.N.Tayade (28) A.V. Tayade (29) Vidhate Arjunrao Bitwar (30) Swami Vimlanand Atmaram.

Educational Conference of Shepherd Caste

On 1st and 2nd of coming January the All India Educational Conference of all Kshatriya shepherd castes is organised at Baramati Dist. Pune. This has been published in newspaper. The prominent leaders at Indore, Gwalior, etc. have been given

invitation personally and some invitations have been sent by post. Hence all the people who are concerned with the conference should make it a point to attend. The Non-Brahmin leaders from Indore, Pune, Mumbai, Satara, Kolhapur, Solapur, etc. have agreed to attend the conference.

Yours sincerely,
Hari Piraji Dhaygude,
General Secretary, Baramati



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I mounted on the chariot with bow in my hands and it is my satisfaction that bravery has surcharged my body. To establish fame in the world, to enhance the prestige of one's own religion and to release the earth from its burden, now Parth be doubtless, pay attention to this struggle. After hearing this there should be no need of saying anything more.

Year 1st] Friday, 3rd February, 1928. [Issue 22,23,24th

Day-to-day Problems

1. The detailed information of Mahad conference has been given in this issue elsewhere. It is our honest opinion that there was no other conference which was as successful as was the conference of Mahad. However, some people have raised some objection against the Mahad conference. We have received a letter of objection from Shri Bhuskute, the Editor of newspaper 'Swarajya'. Before we answer his letter we first of all are reproducing his letter here as it is.

"Dear,

Is this news is it correct that at Mahad in the conference of the untouchables 'ManuSmriti' has been burnt? What will be gained by such acts? In your view what kind of right untouchables will get by such act? The untouchables are suffering injustice for thousands of years. Is only ManuSmriti responsible for this? The society of that time needed rules and Manu framed the rules to suit that society. Old books are the preservers of the ideas and the ideals of the then existing society. If we are to get our rights protected there is no use of

doing this kind of act. This is my desire that at least this kind of act should not take place under your patronage.

In the Kolaba Samachar newspaper I just now read a reporting. The owner of the Kolaba Samachar has called you as Bhimasur and he has also stated that by destroying Hinduism you wish to establish a new religion. Will you please send the copy of your speech made at Mahad? I felt very bad after reading it from the Kolaba Samachar that the Manusmriti has been burnt. Poor Manu, in what way he is guilty? Manusmriti is a collection of codified laws of that time. In what way the act of burning this book is going to affect the caste practices and the practice of untouchability? The practice of untouchability is an established fact in society and it is found in almost all religious books also. Our saints and social reformers both old and new tried to abolish the practice of untouchability from our society but they did not succeed in it. However we should not get disappointed because our earlier saints and reformer did not succeed. We should continue our efforts more vigorously. Only precaution we will have to take is that our movement should not go on the line of Satyashodhak movement. The word Satyashodhak I have used here purposefully. In Maharashtra the Satyashodhak movement means hatred towards Brahmins, no participation in politics, caring more for the view point of the government. Hence our movement must remain away from it. We have indescribable enthusiasm for our movement. By your work you have earned popularity among the untouchables. This is your praiseworthy act. In the so called untouchable community a learned man like you who thinks good of the people is born is really good fortune of Maharashtra. If this enthusiasm goes on the pattern of Non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi and Non-Cooperation with the government it is bound to be successful. If the movement of untouchables is based on justice then why should there be any fear of the government injunction? The movement of the untouchables should not become a weapon for the government. I had decided to come to Mahad but after hearing that the Satyagraha has been suspended I did not come. But now I am feeling that it would have been good if I had come

there. I would not have allowed the burning of ManuSmriti by your hands. Because this has given the weapon in the hands of your opponents.

If you happen to come to Poona please come to the Swarajya office.

I wanted to write on Satyagraha and the burning of ManuSmriti but before that I thought, I must hear you, hence I have sent this letter. Please try to reply to this letter at the earliest.

2. We have received many letters criticising us more severely than one produced above. These severe critics are the Editor of 'Prabodhan' of Dhulia; Kolaba Samachar from Pen; Ran Garjana(battle cry) of Mumbai; Bhala (spear) of Pune, and Parishak (examiner) of Belgaum. Instead of replying to all these papers we are replying only to the Editor of the paper 'Swarajya'. Many will feel surprised for this. The reasons for not replying to all others are many. The first reason is that there is nothing in their letters except abuses and we are not bothered about their abuses. The contemporary Muslim historians have abused Shivaji as dog (Kutta) as rat (Musak) as Saitan as enemy (Ganim) and as rebellion. Jesus Christ was guillotined by his own men. Mohammad the Prophet was driven out from his own birth place Medina and he had to live in alienated land of Makka. We are aware that we might face the similar situation. What happened on Raigad fort is an indication of the coming events. We are aware that in the life of a revolutionary person such a situation is almost inevitable. Hence we are not worried about the writing of those who condemn us or threaten us or abuse us. Under this circumstance we tell our indecent critics that the leaders of the untouchables do not consider themselves as omniscient. However in case of the movement of the untouchables they have decided upon certain fixed principles. We agree that about details mistake may occur but making the loose talks about such mistakes can be disastrous to the critics. The critics must remember this. Once the tussle begins then it may be wordy or even otherwise also. The Editor of 'Kolaba Samachar' was annoyed when

Dr. Ambedkar paid his visit to Rayagad fort. He threatened him saying that had he gone there informing us, we would have shown him our power. But the same Editor after receiving a protest letter from the Muslims because they were called as animal-like, wetted his pant with fright. He then immediately in his next issue, begged apology of the Muslims. The Muslims did not do anything more than merely sending their protest letter is their wise step. If the Editor uses his tongue more severely against the Muslims then they will go beyond sending the protest letter and teach him a lesson. The thing which the Muslims can do it cannot be supposed that the untouchables will not do. The Editor of Kolaba Samachar and the Editors of the other papers must know that the untouchables have assumed the form of burning fire. Do not play with this burning fire. Other reasons of not responding to these obscene critics is that by calling us as bad people we do not become bad people. The people who regard old as gold, injustice as tradition and support the inhuman writing in religious books are the supporters of inhuman practices : Dr. Ambedkar will not become mad by these people calling him mad. Those who are interested in discussing with us we are prepared to have our dialogue with them. But we do not want to become beasts by following the beasts. It is for these reasons we have ignored all others except the letter sent by the Editor of the paper 'Swarajya'.

3. After examining the above mentioned letter it can be seen that the real objection is that in the Mahad conference the Manusmriti was burnt. Those who raise this charge are the people who have either not read the Manusmriti or those that accept whatever is written there. The tradition in this country is that those who are extremists in politics are moderates in social reforms. It must be accepted that the Editor of Swarajya paper, Pune is an exception to this tradition. We are sure that as he is an extremist in politics, he is also equally so in matters of social reforms. Under the circumstances we cannot say that the principles enunciated in Manusmriti are acceptable to him. Hence the objection he has raised must be due to the fact that he must not have read the Manu-Smriti. Our request therefore,

to our friend is that he must read Manusmriti at least once. After reading Manusmriti we have come to the firm conclusion that in that book hatred towards the Shudras, their humiliation as low-born caste, the low origin of their caste and the saying of spreading disrespect about them in society are in full and in plenty. There it is not the protection of religion but it is the humiliation of the religion. There is not a single possible trace of social equality but a human inequality has danced everywhere. The man interested in the principle of self-determination will never accept this pleading of the book. To show that untouchables also do not accept this it was burnt at Mahad.

4. The second charge of our friend is that the Manusmriti is the collection of rules of olden days. Those rules are not applicable now. Then what is the use of burning such a compendium? Had it been possible for us like our friend to regard Manusmriti as merely an old book it would have been happy thing for us, but unfortunately we are not in a position to regard it as merely an old book. We are sure that had our friend not fixed his eyes on the rise of the moon of Swarajya he would have seen what burns beneath his feet. Those who think that Manusmriti is an old book what harm is there if it remains there. To such people our earnest suggestion is that they should see the injustice that is going on against the people called Balhai in central India. In central India the Balhais who are untouchables among them from some days the wind of reform is blowing. These people by coming together resolved to give up using old type of clothes and following old customs and traditions which degrade their position. They started living the new mode of life. But now the touchable Hindus of the villages have issued the following notice to the Balhais.

- (1) Balhai male members should not use the turban made of golden threads (Jartani)
- (2) Balhai male members should use the Dhoti with coloured border
- (3) Balhais must reach the message of death occurred in the house of touchable to his relatives in other villages however long the distance of the relatives may be.

- (4) In the marriage function of the touchable the Balhai must play the musical instruments.
- (5) The Balhai woman should not use golden and silver ornaments, they should also not use quality dresses.
- (6) The Balhai woman must work as midwife.
- (7) The Balhais must work by taking whatever emolument they get from the touchable owner.

Here by preparing the list of these conditions the touchables in the village have asked the Balhais to sign the paper in which the conditions are mentioned. If not the Balhai must quit the villages. Some Balhais have left the villages where their ancestors lived for centuries and have settled in the area of princely states and in the British territory. The calamity which befell on the Balhais the similar calamity has also fallen on the Mahars of Kolaba and Ratnagiri districts of Maharashtra. Last time the Editor of newspaper 'Bhala' had stated with arrogance that the Buddhists attacked Brahmins due to the animal killing in Yadnya but the Brahmins at once gave up eating flesh and drinking wine and gave befitting answer to the Buddhists. By such writings this arrogant man perhaps wishes to indicate that the determination which his ancestors had, cannot be had by the untouchables. On this we would like to tell this boasting man that he should tour Kolaba and Ratnagiri districts and see how the Mahars are determined people. If he tours he will come to know that the Mahars who upto March 1927 were eager to carry the dead animals away from the villages and regarded the eating of the flesh of the dead animal as their religion the same people have now determined not to touch the dead animal and its flesh. As a part of Vatan services the Mahars used to beg food from the touchable by going door to door. They have now given it up completely. The Brahmins gave up eating flesh and drinking Sura (wine) only to protect their selfish interests. To get the places of Buddhist monks the Brahmins had no other go except giving up drinking Soma and eating flesh. The determination of untouchables in Kolaba district was not for gain but for sacrificing the gains. The Editor of Bhala who is surviving due

to the name of his father must remember it. But these reform loving untouchables are facing the same problems which the Balhais faced in central India. The touchables wherever the Mahars are in absolute minority there they are forcing them to eat the flesh of dead animals; to beg food from the touchable and to salute the touchables. To our friend the Editor of 'Swarajya' paper our question is what do the above mentioned details indicate? These details indicate that the Manusmriti is not a dead book but it operates equally with great force in existing society. The Manusmriti says that the Shudras must live like unholy people; they should beg for food; they should not store wealth and carry the dead animals. The touchables do not allow the untouchables to reform themselves because it is the violation of Manusmriti. If untouchables give up begging, give up eating the flesh of the dead animals and start leading the clean life in what way these things harm the touchables is a mystery. The untouchables should stay where they are is the effort of the touchables. The touchables are not allowing the untouchables to reform themselves merely because they are following the Manusmriti in letter and spirit. This being the reality our friend must think to what extent it is correct to say that the Manusmriti is merely an old book of old conventions.

5. Those who do not agree with our logic on Manusmriti our question to them is if Manusmriti is an old outdated book then why are you unhappy over its burning? If the merchant burns the heap of waste papers in his house nobody bothers about it. If Manusmriti is like a waste paper material then why there should be hue and cry over its burning? When these people are annoyed over its burning considerably then the Manusmriti is not a book of waste paper collection. It is clear from this fact that the people respect it. They follow it. Then the book which is acceptable to the people but is not acceptable to us then why should we not burn it? The objection of our friend over this is that what is the gain in burning it? The deep rooted caste system and the practice of untouchability will not go by burning the Manusmriti, on the contrary due to this act the untouchables will lose the sympathy of touchables who

sympathise with their movement. Our answer to these friends is that what did Gandhiji gain in burning the foreign clothes? In matters of Khan-Malini marriage what did the people gain in burning the paper 'Dnyan Prakash'. By boycotting Simon Commission what are the people going to gain? By burning Miss Mayo's book 'Mother India' in New York what did they gain. What were they to gain by burning the foreign clothes, the paper 'Dnyan Prakash' or Miss Mayo's book Mother India or by boycotting Simon Commission the same is to be gained by us by burning the Manusmriti. Burning the condemned thing is one of protesting measures and this measure cannot be called as a rustic measure. This has become now an acceptable measure of protest. This kind of protest measure is used with a view that the people against whom it is used is to bring about a change in their thinking and reform them in their angle of approach. By burning Manusmriti the protest which we have registered was to show that the social inequality which is in the practice of Hindu society is wrong and we oppose it tooth and nail. Taking into account the denial which we have registered about the Manusmriti the people under the influence of Brahmanism will give up Brahmanism as a wrong mode of social behaviour. It is with this expectation we have done the act of burning the Manusmriti. On this the objection of our friends is that the Brahmanism will not die merely by burning Manusmriti. Our answer to these friends is that if Brahmanism does not die we have only two alternatives. One is to kill those who are under the influence of Brahmanism and if it is not possible then leave Hinduism. The sympathy of the touchables for the cause of untouchables is a foolish thinking. The followers of Manusmriti can never be the supporters of the cause of untouchables. Therefore, we do not expect anything from such people. Some people argue that we unnecessarily attack all the caste Hindus and lose their sympathy. This is wrong. Had it been our attitude our touchable friends like Ananatrao Chitre, Gangadharrao Sahasrabudhe, Shri Devrao Naik, Moshiche, Mundale, and Amrutkar would not have been respectable friends in our liberation movement. We definitely need the sympathy of the touchables but we do not make mistake of taking help from anybody unless his words and

deeds go together.

6. We stopped our Satyagraha at Mahad on the suggestion of the Collector is another allegation against us. In their words the Mahad Satyagraha meant that it was a game as suggested by the Collector. We are happy that they have not stated that by fearing the Collector we stopped our Satyagraha. If a brave champion of Satyagraha blames us we can understand that. But those like the Editor of 'Swatantrya' (freedom) in whose life there was not a single occasion to think about Satyagraha are not qualified to criticise us. Since he is born in a Brahmin family all powers come to him by birth only and therefore, there is no reason for him to undertake Satyagraha against anything. There is no other work except working to fill the belly. When such an Editor of the paper 'Swatantrya' of Nasik says that we suspended the Satyagraha by fearing the Collector, we simply laugh and ridicule his mischievous writing. Those who believe in the idea of do first and then speak alone can blame others. Many people are of this opinion that we have no courage to go against the order of the Collector and hence we suspended the Satyagraha. We would like to tell these people that the Collector has not issued the prohibitory order. Therefore, their view that we were afraid of the Collector's order is absolutely wrong. The collector has never used the language of punishment. All his efforts were for conciliation. Hence allegation against us can be limited only to that we listened the Collector and in listening him whether we did a right thing or a wrong thing.

7. It is our honest opinion that we did a right thing in listening to the Collector. About 10 thousand people had gathered at Mahad to participate the Satyagraha. From the beginning of the preparation of Satyagraha at Mahad the untold miseries were inflicted on the Mahars in Ratnagiri and Kolaba districts. There were two committees which were working when Satyagraha was about to be launched. One to get the names of the Satyagrahis registered and another to get the complaints of the people registered. After reading the big volume of the complaints it will be noticed that in these two districts there was not a single village where the untouchables

were free from the atrocities of the caste Hindus. Everybody was aware that due to the Satyagraha movement at Mahad the atrocities will go on increasing against the untouchables. But we have not bothered much thinking that the government will come to our help against the atrocities of the touchable Hindus. Since the Collector reversed his policy it became doubtful whether the government will come to our aid.

8. There is another reason why our doubt became firm. The Satyagraha is to be launched against the obstinate people. Before rejecting the opinion of the Collector it was necessary for us to see whether his opinion was obstinacy. Our friends' opinion that while resorting to Satyagraha we should take governments' opinion into account is not our opinion. Not only this but this opinion of our friends will not be acceptable to anybody resorting to Satyagraha. Those who know the details of our Satyagraha are aware that there was no obstinacy in the policy of the Collector. Before this issue entered the court the Collector had stated that he will not prevent the untouchables to go to the tank. On the contrary if the touchables prevent the untouchables from going to the tank he had warned the touchables that he will deal with them. In addition to this he had come to the meeting of the untouchables and told them that he was not opposed to their cause. He had also told the untouchables if they draw water from any other public water tank anywhere he is prepared to help them. We do not think such a Collector will be called as obstinate by anybody. Under the circumstances had we not listened to him it would have been an act against our own sympathizer. Moreover had we gone against the government it would have given a chance to the critics of the government to say that the government is against the untouchables. The Collector has already declared that the government is not against the untouchables. In fact the untouchables are sandwiched between the government and the touchables. It is necessary that the untouchables will have to choose one between these to combat, because the untouchables are not that powerful to combat these two simultaneously. Where the touchables are not willing to grant the just rights of the untouchables to untouchables there, we

felt that the compromise with the government will be the wise step of the untouchables.

9. Some foolish people argue that we have converted Mahad into Bardoli, but they have not thought why this has been so. There is a wide difference between the Satyagraha of the touchables and the Satyagraha that is launched by the untouchables. The Satyagraha of the touchables is carried on against the government and it is supported by all the people. Whereas the Satyagraha carried on by the untouchables is opposed by all the touchables. Opposing one's own society is not a small thing. In spite of this the untouchables showed the courage to launch Satyagraha against the touchables. In fact this alone should make untouchables worth respecting. But we thought of protecting those who were showing courage to launch Satyagraha. Our aim is to protect the soldiers of Satyagraha by just measures. Hence we had to listen the Collector.

10. Some people have alleged that in listening the Collector we have disappointed the participating people. It has given a setback to their bravery. The participants who had come forward with vigour and energy to launch Satyagraha whether their tempo can remain the same is a doubt expressed by some people. These doubts may be true to some extent. But it is not hundred percent correct. It is true that by suspecting the Satyagraha the people's enthusiasm has received a setback but it is wrong to think after sunset the sun will not rise again. Similarly, it is wrong to believe that the people's enthusiasm which is now at a low level will not be roused again. Enthusiasm or lack of it depends upon the problem that many face. Unless the man faces a difficult situation the generation of vitality is not possible in him. If the difficult situation that the man faces is beyond his power and strength then that man becomes almost helpless and as good as dead. The movement of Satyagraha that was launched was not only to claim the right over the Mahad tank. It was launched not only to attain the objective at Mahad but it was the beginning of our struggle to attain our total objective in this country. To what extent this struggle will go on will depend upon our resources to protect

our people against the injustice. Had the Satyagraha at Mahad been unsuccessful our future plans of Satyagraha would have been difficult. But now we can make a solid preparation for future Satyagraha. Now some people say that when you knew all these happening then why did you go to Mahad. Our answer on this is that until we reached Dasgaon (a village near Mahad) we did not know that the Collector will give up taking our side. We knew only when we reached Dasgaon that the temporary preventive order of civil court has been issued and we had decided to go against this temporary preventive order. We knew that the civil court has the power to punish with six month's imprisonment and we were prepared to undergo the punishment. And we had clearly told this to the officer who had come to us for enquiry. We thought that upon this Collector will keep quiet by saying that if they intend to go to jail let them do it. But the Collector changed the side and took the side of the touchables. To save our people from the trouble of the touchables we had to listen to the Collector and suspend the Satyagraha. Thus we stopped the Satyagraha only to protect the untouchables from the touchables.

11. Our friends are worried whether our movement will go on the line of Satyashodhak movement. In the opinion of the people at present is that Satyashodhak movement means the hatred towards the Brahmins; no participation in politics; behaving by taking the view of the government into account. This is the existing view of the people in Maharashtra. They have, therefore, warned us that the movement of the untouchables should not follow the programme of the Satyashodhak movement. Here we would like to tell our friends very emphatically that we take pride in calling ourselves as Satyashodhaks (truth finders). It is our firm opinion on that the Satyashodhak movement means the movement of equality and it is a movement of true religion. Not only this but it is our considered opinion that every Swarajist should be a Satyashodhak (truth finder). However the allegation made against the present day Satyashodhak movement by our friend seems to be somewhat considerable. But why did Satyashodhak movement take this turn on this

our friends it seems, have not pondered over properly. The Satyashodhak movement took this kind of improper turn only because of the opposition of the Brahmins to it almost unanimously. Had at least some Brahmins accepted the Satyashodhak ideology of equality and true religion the ghost of Brahman hating would not have been there around the neck of present day Satyashodhak movement. This would not have produced the need for Satyashodhak movement to remain closer to the government. When this is the circumstance our request to our friends is that they should become the followers of Satyashodhak movement and also try to make their Brahmin brothers follow the same.

12. It is necessary that the untouchables must struggle to acquire the rights but it is also equally necessary that they should enjoy the rights which they have already acquired. The administration under the Peshwa rule was an autocracy. The rulers did not care for the will and woe of the people. Therefore, the justice for the people was difficult particularly the condition of the untouchables was very much miserable. After the abolition of Peshwa rule the British democratic system of rule began. Under this rule the municipalities, local Boards etc. got full freedom in their governance. The important subjects like education have been entrusted to these self-governing local bodies. To what extent these institutions will be useful to the untouchables will depend upon the quality of the representatives that the untouchables send to these bodies. Hence the untouchables should take utmost care while sending their representatives to these bodies. The election in the Pune Municipal body is nearing closer. Here two representatives of the untouchables are to be elected. We hear that many are interested in these two seats. The names of Subhedar Ghadge and Shri Pandurang Nathuji Rajbhoj are figuring prominently. We have no doubt both these persons are capable to do their job well in the Municipal body. Our experience shows that both these men are tenacious, courageous and have the urge to work for the people. We very earnestly urge our voters of Pune that they should elect these two persons as their representatives in Pune Municipal body. It is surprising that

Shri Sakat who shouts that all positions are occupied by the Mahars and the Mangs do not get anything is not contesting the Pune election. It is likely that he may try to get appointed in the Pune Municipal School Board with the help of Mate Company. This is our guess. If a member of the Mang community is to be appointed without considering the qualification then Shri Jadhav is better candidate than Shri Sakat. This is our considered opinion.

Conference of the Mahad Satyagraha

Date: 25-26-27 December, 1927

Unprecedented
Enthusiasm

Tremendous
Awakening

**Determination of Ten Thousand
People to Suffer Imprisonment**

Mediation of Collector

Suspension of
Satyagraha

Huge Procession

Encirclement of
Chavadar Tank

**Touchable Leaders Running
Here and There**

(From Our Special Correspondent)

This conference was organised on 25th, 26th and 27th of December 1927. Shri Anant Vinayak Chitre was entrusted the work of making preparations for the conference.

Shri Chitre was A Leading Brave Man In Matters Of Mahad Satyagraha.

Considering his physical stuff anybody would have doubted whether he will do this kind of courageous work. The committee which entrusted this work to him he made that committee more energetic and enthusiastic. The credit of making this conference a success goes to him undoubtedly.

Shri Chitre had reached Mahad 15 days in advance. He saw that except some few young men rest of the touchables were opposed to holding the conference. He also saw that the touchables at Mahad had planned to see that nothing was available to the organisers of the conference. It was a sort of non-cooperation of the touchables there. But Shri Chitre succeeded in taking the co-operation of some young men like Shantaram Potanis, Keshavrao Deshpande, Shri Vamanrao Patki, Kamalakar Tipnis etc. the name of Shri Patki should be specially mentioned here. It is due to him the things and other material necessary for the conference were made available for the conference. Since the organisers had to purchase many things, due to the non-cooperation of the touchables, the conference became somewhat expensive. But the situation where nothing was available even if the gold is exchanged there the best arrangements were made out of the worst situation. The credit goes to Shri Chitre and to Shri Patki for converting the situation favourable beyond our imagination. Shri Subhedar Ghadge, and Shri Thorat from Pune, Shri Bhanagarkar Jamedar from Bhanagar had reached Mahad on 24th to assist them. Shri Subhedar Ghadge was entrusted the work of maintaining the discipline and making preparation for meals. It was a matter of great surprise and appreciation that Shri Ghadge shouldered these two responsibilities quite ably. Knowing the importance of the conference and the seriousness of the situation both the district Collector and the Superintendent of Police had encamped there at Mahad from 19th December only. The delegates of the conference began coming from 23rd December and till 25th December the number of the delegates went upto 10,000. In between after hearing that the preventive order is not being issued from the Collector the touchables of Mahad in order to prevent the untouchables from going to the Chavadar Tank filed a suit in Civil Court against Dr. Ambedkar and four other persons. They had secured the temporary order from the court to prevent untouchables from going to the tank on 25th December. Though the Collector was unhappy over the preventive order of the court yet it was necessary for him to honour the order of the Civil Court. But it must be remembered that inspite of all this

he kept up his effort to find out a peaceful solution in this connection. It should also be remembered that he did not make any effort to issue preventive order under Indian Penal Code 144. But from 23rd December onward he began his efforts to dissuade the people from going to the tank by coming to the camp of the people. Sometimes he used to ask the question to the people who had come there for offering Satyagraha, whether they will listen to the Collector or to Dr. Ambedkar and on this the people emphatically told the Collector that they will listen to Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. Ambedkar Arriving At Mahad

Dr. Ambedkar and other people numbering around 250 began their journey to Mahad from Bombay in the morning of 24 December. With him were Shri Shivatarkar, Shri Dhondi Narayan Gayakwad, Shri Kamble, Shri Gangavane, Shri Vanamali, Shri Rajbhoj of Pune, Shri Bhaurao Gayakwad of Nasik etc. with these leaders there were also the prominent social workers like Sahasrabudhe of Social Service League and Pradhan Brothers of the organisation "Equality". Shri Devarao Naik the Editor of the paper 'Brahmin Non-Brahmin' did not join the team due to his illness. A big gathering of people had come there to the sea port to see the Satyagrahis off. These people garlanded the leaders. The people shouted the slogan 'Victory to the Satyagrahis' and the slogan filled the air. The Padmavati (the name of the boat) started from Bombay at 9 o'clock in the morning and at 5:30 p.m. the boat reached port called 'Hareshwar' on way the untouchables of every village welcomed them and shouted slogan of victory to the Satyagrahis.

Reception at Kolmandala

From port to Mahad it was some distance. On the way to Mahad there is a village Kolmandala where the untouchables of the village had made all the preparation to accord reception to the Satyagrahis. Shri Pandurang Babaji Mandlekar was the Chairman of the reception committee. In a village like Kolmandala the preparation that the people had made for reception was such that it was just unforgettable. The

Satyagrahis spent the night there and next day by taking breakfast they started their journey by a boat called 'Amba'. It was a strip of the sea through which the boat started voyaging. On both the sides of the strip it was a thick forest. It was a beautiful scene. The sunlight of the morning was quite pleasant, Amba reached Dasgaon port at 12:30 p.m. Here almost 3000 people were waiting for the arrival of Dr. Ambedkar and his team to join them to go to Mahad. The Superintendent of Police, Kolaba District Mr. Farant, Police Inspector, Fauzdar etc. were present there. After exchange of goodwill between Dr. Ambedkar and the S.P. they gave the letter from Collector to Dr. Ambedkar. And told Dr. Ambedkar that the Collector Mr. Hud has requested to meet him. Then Dr. Ambedkar and Shri Sahasrabudhe went to Mahad with Mr. Farant in his vehicle. Before going to Mahad Dr. Ambedkar told the people that they should maintain strict discipline and peace and come to Mahad.

From Dasgaon to Mahad

The distance between Dasgaon Port to Mahad is of some 5 miles. After Dr. Ambedkar and Sahasrabudhe went ahead, Shri Shivatarkar told the people that they should strictly follow the instructions given by Dr. Ambedkar. He prepared the groups of five people each and placed them in line. It became a sort of infantry line. This huge infantry line proceeded to Mahad giving slogan "Har Har Mahadev, Victory to Satyagraha" Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha had raised its own band company. So by beating the band and by playing the band music the Satyagrahis entered the town of Mahad. The Superintendent of Police was with them moving around here and there. When the Satyagrahis came near the place they had fixed, Shri Anantrao Chitre came near them. He showed the Satyagrahis the fort of Rayagad (the capital of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj) and asked the people to raise the slogan in the name of Jijamata (the mother of Shivaji) and Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to seek the blessings from them for our victory. The slogans in the name of Shri Shivaji and Jijamata infused the spirit of enthusiasm in Satyagrahis. It is with this spirit and enthusiasm the Satyagrahis entered the camp of Satyagrahis.

Session of the Conference

First Day

Because of the Non-cooperation of the touchables at Mahad the touchables had to see that no facility of any kind is made available to the conference. Therefore, procuring the place for pandal had become a difficult task. The lands around the city of Mahad more or less belonged to the Brahmins and Shetjis (merchants) and these were happy in creating the problem of availability of land for the conference. But there was a big piece of land nearby which belonged to a Musalman by name Fateh Khan. Mr. Fateh Khan gave his land with great pleasure for arranging the conference there. This slapped on the face of the Brahmins and Shetjis. However, they had determined to see that the conference does not materialise. They went to Mr. Fateh Khan and entreated him for not giving his land for the purpose of the said conference. But Mr. Khan ignored them and he drove them away from there. It is on this sight a big pandal was raised and it accommodated almost 7 to 8 thousand people. It was adorned with flowers and leaves of variety of trees. Only Mahatma Gandhi's portrait was displayed in the pandal. In front of the pandal a Vedi (altar) was prepared and it was adorned to burn the Manusmriti (a holy book of the laws of the Hindus). On the burning of the Manusmriti the Brahmanised Hindus started propagating that since Dr. Ambedkar was unable to launch the Satyagraha in order to show the people that he has done something he burned the Manusmriti. The critics must know that the Vedi to burn the Manusmriti was already prepared while raising the pandal. The burning of the Manusmriti was a part of the programme which was already prepared and it was already mentioned in the programme papers.

The programme of the Satyagraha at

Mahad conference, 25th Dec. 1927.

10 a.m. the speech of the President.

After his speech all people will go to the tank and bring the water drawn in the vessels.

12:30 p.m. – The lunch

3 p.m. – Fetching the water from the tank and bring the water again.

7:30 p.m. – Light refreshment

And then Kirtan (religious narration) and Satyashodhak Tamasha (a kind of folk art involving melodramatic song and dance content)

26th December, 1927

10 a.m. – A resolution suggesting the reform in the internal system of the castes. Then all people will go to the tank and fetch the water.

12:30 p.m. – The lunch

3 p.m. – General resolutions and again going to the tank and fetching the water

7:30 p.m. – Light refreshment and then the Kirtan and Satyashodhak Tamasha. Then there will be the end of the conference, only 250 people will remain behind and will keep on fetching the water every day until 2nd January, 1928.

Special Instruction:

On this occasion the Satyagraha committee requests all the people gathered here to maintain discipline and peace. We have every hope that the people gathered here for Satyagraha will not disturb peace in case of any eventuality.

Yours Sincerely,

Sitaram Namdeo Shivatarkar
Secretary, Satyagraha Committee

Since the people from Bombay did not come to Mahad at the appointed time; some changes had been made in the programme. According to the changed time-table the work of the conference began at 4 p.m. Shri Shivatarkar read the telegrams of good wishes sent by Shri Shridhar Balvant Tilak, Dr. Purushottam Solanki, M.L.C. Then after tremendous applaud Dr. Ambedkar the Chairman of the Satyagraha

committee read out his written speech. (His speech has been published here as supplementary to this issue) then the following resolutions were passed in the conference.

Declaration of the Birth Rights of All Hindus

Resolution 1st :

It is our considered opinion that India is the best example of how a nation goes to the lowest ebb of its position due to the social injustice, religious lethargy, fall in politics and the slavery in economic field. The Hindu society reached to such a bad state of affairs only because the majority of the Hindus did not bother about their just rights, and those who knew their rights did not bother to preserve them. And those who invaded their rights did it successfully. It is the duty of every Individual to exercise his rights and those who try to trample his rights he should protect them at any cost. Keeping the birth rights of every Hindu in mind we are publishing the following declaration for the information of all the people.

(1) All men are born equal and they will remain equal until their death. From the point of view of their utility there may be some change in their status but their social position must remain the same. Hence in politics and in public life the equality principle must not be violated is again our considered opinion.

(2) The final aim of political and social systems should be to preserve the man's birth rights forever. Therefore, we protest the system of social inequality in Hindu society and also the treaties written in ancient and in modern times supporting the social inequality.

(3) The entire humanity is the birth place of all human rights and all powers whether the rights of individual or of a group of people or a class of people if not granted by the people in general will not be acceptable eventhough they have the sanction of political or religious power, therefore, this conference is not ready to accept the Shruti, Smriti and Puranas as a genuine source for the organisation of the social system.

(4) Every individual is free to function according to the

dictates of his birth rights. Some restrictions can be put on these if these come in the way of using these rights. However these limits should also be decided by the people only through their religious or political agencies. Therefore, this conference rejects social discrimination which is in practice between the castes.

(5) The practices which are harmful to the society should be prevented by law. The practices which are not prevented by law must be permitted to be practiced by all. Similarly the thing which the law has not made compulsory for the people should not be asked to do it compulsorily. For this reason nobody should be prevented to use roads, public places, public wells and tanks, public temples etc. Those who do it this conference considers them as the enemies of the society.

(6) The law does not mean a restriction determined by a particular class. It is the people or their representatives will have the power to decide about it. This law whether it is protective or administrative should be applied to all equally well. Since the society is to be organised on the basis of social equality in matters of the prestige and position power and profession the castes will come in the way of it. The difference between the individuals that we see must be based on individual merit and not on the basis of an individual. Therefore this conference condemns the existing caste system and the social inequality based on castes.

Proposed by : Shri Sitaram Namadev Shivatarkar

Seconded by : Shri Bhau Krishnarao Gayakwad

Supported by : Shri N.T.Jadhav

Supported by : Shrimati Gangabai Savant

Resolution 2nd: Manusmriti which insults the Shudras and blocks their progress, by destroying their self-power imposes social, political and economic slavery on them permanently. Therefore, it is our considered opinion that the Manusmriti stands in opposition to the man's birth rights mentioned above in the Declaration of Man's Rights. Hence the Manusmriti is not qualified to be called as a holy book on religion and in order to bring forth this opinion of the conference to the world

we are openly burning this Manusmriti here.

Proposed by : Shri Gangadhar Nilkanth Sahasrabudhe

Seconded by : Shri Rajbhoj

Supported by : Shri Thorat

Note : the utterances recited in the above mentioned resolution will be published in the next issue of Bahishkrit Bharat.

Resolution 3rd: All Hindus must be regarded as the people of one Varna. This one Varna must be known as Hindu and called as Hindu. Calling anybody by Varna name as Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra or by caste name as Mahar, Mang etc. must be forbidden by laws. At the most professional names like tailor, goldsmith, gardener or provincial names like Maratha, Kokanasth (a man from Konkan area), Deshasth (a man from Desh area) can be used.

Proposed by : Shri Kondiram Kholwadikar

Seconded by : Subhedar Ghatge

Supported by : Shri Nirmal Gangavane

Supported by : Dhondiram Narayan Gaikwad

Resolution 4th : This conference is of the opinion that (1) Dharmadhikari – Religious head must be elected by the people (2) The right to compete for the headship must be open to all (3) By conducting the examination for religious headship the successful candidates should be given certificates. If anybody officiates any religious rite without possessing the certificate he should be punished by law. (4) Village level religious priest, Taluka level religious priest and provincial level religious priest must be their divisions. (5) These priests, religious officers should be the government servants and they should not accept anything from the people for performing their religious rites, they should receive salary from the government.

Proposed by : Shri Patitpawandasbuwa

Seconded by : Girijashankar Shivadas

Supported by : Shri Chavare Master

Supported by : Ragho Narayan Vanamali

After some speeches were made on the above mentioned resolutions the Manusmriti was ceremoniously burnt. This ceremony was performed by saintly men who had gathered there for the conference.

After this event the first day programme came to an end.

Second Day

After the end of the first day session at 7:30 p.m. the people were waiting eagerly for their evening meals. The eatables that the people had brought with them were all exhausted as they had come there two days in advance. The people that had come from Bombay had already starved for the whole day and were waiting for the evening meals eagerly. But the utensils were to come from Bombay since these did not reach to Mahad in time the food was not cooked. Therefore, the people were disappointed. The Satyagraha committee was aware of this kind of eventuality. There they had purchased some chick peas along with rice cereals and other things. On the night of the first day they ate only some chick peas and grams. The people were unhappy over this situation but Dr. Ambedkar himself started eating the grams then the rest of the people followed him happily. Next day the second day of the conference began at 9 a.m. Dr. Ambedkar had warned the volunteers that they should not allow other than the participants to enter the conference pandal since the issue of Satyagraha was to be discussed there. Then Dr. Ambedkar placed his proposal of launching the Satyagraha to the people of the conference, while placing the proposal of Satyagraha before the people he said that yesterday he was called by the Collector for discussion. The Collector told him that he was not against our Satyagraha but the touchables have filed a suit against the Satyagraha in civil court, the court has issued the order that unless the court gives its decision the untouchables should not be allowed to undertake Satyagraha. The Collector told him further that he is participating in this merely because the decision of the court should not be dishonoured. Then Dr. Ambedkar told the Collector that he himself has come there to participate in the

Satyagraha and he will not go back upon his decision and he will tell the people who have come there for Satyagraha to do the same. If I try to dissuade them from Satyagraha my opinion will not put pressure on them. He further said that he told the Collector that he will not tell the people that they should not resort to Satyagraha because the court has issued the preventive order. On this the Collector said that he should be permitted to say a few words to the people. Then Dr. Ambedkar said that he has promised the Collector that an opportunity will be given to him to address the people here. I have not made any commitment beyond this. Hence whatever decision you would like to take you can take that. In this episode it should be remembered that in any work if the gain of any permanent nature is to be secured it cannot be done without much hardship. There is no evidence either in Puranas or in history that anything important has been attained without severe austerity. Happiness comes only after the end of sorrow, hence if we are required to go to jail by breaking the preventive order we need not be afraid of it. The preventive order has been passed on the basis of prevailing practice here. It needs to be seen that whether the prevailing practice is based on justice or injustice. Otherwise by following the Court order the injustice against which we are struggling we may be constrained to tolerate that injustice. Satyagraha is a hard penance. The participants of Satyagraha by controlling themselves will have to suffer hardship. This means we have to voluntarily surrender before others. We cannot break any order of the officers but while proceeding for Satyagraha if officers caught hold of us and put us in jail nobody should beg for apology. Whatever we did we did well should be their version till the end.

In short (1) Not to bear sticks (2) Following the government order (3) Readiness to go to jail (4) Begging for pardon before the government, these are the conditions that the Satyagrahis should strictly follow. Then only your joining the Satyagraha will be fruitful. There is no use of your joining the Satyagraha merely because I tell you to do that. If you are convinced that your struggle is based on justice and if you are prepared to undergo any kind of suffering then only you should join it.

Then he said that on this resolution whatever speeches that will be made for and against should be listened peacefully and then the decision should be taken. Those who spoke in favour of Satyagraha were

- (1) Padmanath Rajaram Hate
- (2) Pandurang Babaji Mandlekar
- (3) Dhondiram Gayakwad
- (4) Pandurang Nathuji Rajbhoj
- (5) Bhikaji Mahadu (Pensioner)
- (6) Bhanu Ganu Shenavalikar
- (7) Sonu Devaji Khambolikar
- (8) Hiru Varku Shelar
- (9) Govindbuwa Malkhedkar
- (10) Bhivaba Bhovadkar
- (11) Girja Shankar Shivadas
- (12) Ganu Dharmo Ambolikar

Those who spoke against were

- (1) Shivaram Sakharam Hate
- (2) Krishna Yesu
- (3) Gadgebuwa Saheb
- (4) Govind Hawalkar
- (5) Raghu Ananda Shivatarkar
- (6) Ragho Narayan Vanamali
- (7) Punjaji Navasaji Jadhav
- (8) N.T.Jadhav

A specially worth remembering thing is that one Shri Vithoba Mahadev Vadval, of a village Kolavali, an old aged person of Maratha caste had come to participate in the Satyagraha. After the speeches made for and against he stood up and said "I am Maratha by caste. The Mahar brothers of my village are unhappy. They have stopped entering the village. The entrance of the village is desolated. When this is so what is the use of that entrance? Our Mahar brothers are

bent on getting the water. We should satisfy their demand. Therefore, I have come to participate in the Satyagraha.”

Nobody had any doubt about the impact that the above mentioned speech will produce. Those who had any doubt there doubt vanished within no time. Because the people were unwilling to hear the speeches opposing the Satyagraha as they willingly heard the speeches favouring the Satyagraha. Ultimately, Dr. Ambedkar had to appeal the people that they should also hear the speeches of those who speak in opposition of the Satyagraha. In the end after hearing the speeches of both the sides Dr. Ambedkar said that the opinion of this conference seems to be in favour of launching the Satyagraha. And I am happy about it he said. But for me it should not be contingent of blind soldiers. I do not want such people who will deceive themselves by going to jail merely because I or somebody else told them to do so. I want such people who will say that they will go to jail but remove their untouchability by themselves. Before deciding whether Satyagraha or no Satyagraha it should be determined that how many people are prepared for this kind of self-sacrifice. This work is not that easy which can be decided by the sound of clapping or by raising the hands up. It should be carefully decided upon. Therefore, those who are ready to go to jail we should examine them properly. After this examination if we find that majority of them are ready for Satyagraha then I will inform of it to the Collector and I will ask him to come in the evening and speak to you. After hearing him also if your opinion remains firm for launching the Satyagraha then we will execute our programme of Satyagraha. It was 12:30 p.m. And when the meeting was about to be closed there arrived two Non-Brahmin leaders Shri Keshavarao Jedhe and Shri Dinkarrao Javalkar from Bombay in a special car and entered the pandal. The President of the meeting requested them to speak. Shri Javalkar said that you have come here to fight the battle of religion. Unfortunately some Marathas are opposing you and since I myself being the Maratha I am feeling very much bad about it. We the Marathas and the Brahmins harassed you very much till today and we have committed sin by our act. We have given broom in your hands which you

must throw it off now. Wherever we are owners you are also the owners there. The movement launched by your leader Dr. Ambedkar is for your just rights. I had gone to jail twice. You need not worry about jail life. There is no casteism in British jails in India. Outside jail there is a discrimination it is a hell-like life. The jail life is better than this. Shri Jedhe and myself have come here to express our sympathy on behalf of the Satyashodhak movement. Marathas extract more work from the Mahars. By seeing their sweat the Kulkarnis do not show mercy on them. The God should give the Marathas next birth in Mahar families in fact a learned person like Dr. Ambedkar is struggling for you. You must follow him earnestly. The God of India is Brahmanised. This God will not remove your sorrows. It is only the man like Dr. Ambedkar will remove that. Had I been a Mahar I would have come to jail with you with great pleasure. You must establish your rights by breaking the law. This day will go down in the history of India as a red letter day. You should have no fear of jail life. Only the Brahmins who eat ghee and roti should have fear about it. Mending the ways of the touchables is in your hands. You are the sons of this land. Uttering the slogans Har Har Mahadev (slogan of soldiers during the Maratha period) you should capture the tank and follow the instructions of your commander Dr. Ambedkar. This is my personal opinion. The opinion of the Non-Brahmin Party however, is different from it at this juncture and to inform you about that opinion I have come here. The opinion of the Non-Brahmin Party is that the Satyagraha should be kept suspended until the decision of the court comes out. And this is the message of the Non-Brahmin Party to you. The Non-Brahmin Party thinks that opposing the government is not advantageous to the movement of the untouchables. After this Shri Keshavrao Jedhe said that those who troubled us we should remain away from them. This struggle is to establish human dignity. The tank where the dogs and donkeys drink water there, it is shameful that you are not allowed to take water, you have done a very appropriate thing in burning the Manusmriti. It is better to go to jail by performing Satyagraha. Do not listen to those who are

opposing you in this. The meeting ended at 1:30 p.m.

Mediation of the Collector

Dr. Ambedkar appointed 10 to 12 persons to ascertain the real readiness of these persons who wish to participate in the Satyagraha and record their names, villages etc. and within one hour almost 3884 people registered their names. These people said that they have already informed their people at home that they will go to jail and now how can they return without going to jail? This is what the people gathered there said. The people who were listing their names and other details became disgusted and said that it seems, that almost all are ready and there is no need of registration. Then Dr. Ambedkar communicated to the Collector in writing that they are all determined to launch the Satyagraha. If you wish to address them you can come to our meeting which starts at 5 p.m. Accordingly the Collector Saheb, Superintendent of Police, Mr. Farmant, Police Inspector, Fauzdar etc. came there. Then Dr. Ambedkar told the people that the Collector Saheb has come to speak to you personally, I request him to speak to you. After this the Collector Saheb spoke the following in Marathi.

“ You have already been told by the President of the meeting about the reason of my coming over here, I do not know Marathi language well, please excuse me for that. I have heard that you have been preparing for the Satyagraha for the last 3 to 4 months. You will feel unhappy after hearing that you cannot perform the Satyagraha. I would like to give you some piece of advice on that. The resolution of the Bombay Legislative Assembly is that the public schools, public tanks, and public wells, must be open to all. The government of Bombay has communicated this resolution to municipalities, local boards etc. that they should not prevent the untouchables to make use of these. In pursuance of this resolution you desire to go to Chavadar tank. If there was no prohibition we would have permitted you to go to the tank. But some 10 to 12 touchables have gone to the civil court and filed a suit against the Satyagraha stating that the Chavadar tank is a private tank. I cannot decide whether this tank is a public tank or a private

tank. But after examining the papers and hearing the arguments of the pleaders the decision can be given. If it is a private tank then you will not be allowed to go there and if the court declares it as a public property then it will be open to you for your use also. Therefore, my advice to you all is that we should listen to the order of the court. If you do not listen the advice of the court you will be in disadvantageous position. I know that you have made the preparation for this Satyagraha for the last 3-4 months. Therefore, there is an eagerness in you to go to the tank. But remember that a wise man always follows the dictates of law. You know that the people who broke the law against you last time they have been punished. If you break the law you will also be punished similarly. Your desire is to go to the tank but we will have to prevent that. You know that I am the Collector of the District. I am speaking to you in your favour. Here there are two parties, one is of touchables and another is of untouchables. In this where is the government? The government is with the party of the untouchables. If you do not listen to me and oppose the government the reverse will be its effect. Remember that I am your friend and the government is your parents. Those who are instigating you that after this much preparation you must launch Satyagraha are not your friends. They are your enemies. You should do all this work with coolness of mind and legally. Be courageous. Litigation is going on in the court. If the court decision comes out in your favour the tank will remain open for you and if it goes against you then go in appeal to the higher court. Meanwhile you can select another public tank for your Satyagraha. But now you should not go against the law and against the government. Your President is a Barrister, he knows the court procedure very well. By taking his advice you should collect the evidences in your favour. You will need some money also for this work. You should prepare for that. I will tell you one thing and end my speech. I know the Mahars of this Taluka for the last 12 years. They are very good people. They are in the services of the government. There are many Subhedars, Havaldars, Jamadars soldiers etc. who have served in the military. They will never like to insult the government. My

advice to you is that so long as the decision of the court is in pending you should give up the issue of the tank. Remember that the touchables are already against you but the government is in your support. If you try to go to the tank the government will also go against you. You know that we have camped the police there around the tank. You will not even reach there. You have learned leader to lead you. He knows the court work very well. Whatever I have spoken to you I have done that as your friend and I hope that you will also take my advice in the same spirit."

Then after this with the permission of the Chairman Shri Javalkar said "After coming here in the morning we met almost all the leaders of the Maratha community. And all these leaders have assured that they will not go against the untouchables. As an evidence of it they have given declaration letter which has been produced below."

**To Shri Keshavrao Jedhe, and Dinkarrao Javalkar,
Mahad dated 16-12-27,**

Our opinion, the opinion of the Mahad Marathas may be related to the people of the untouchable community.

When the untouchables have gathered here in a big number to launch Satyagraha to get the Chavadar tank of Mahad opened for the use of the untouchables, some people of other caste are spreading the mispropaganda that the Marathas are opposing the untouchables. This propaganda is baseless and irresponsible, we as the leaders of the Maratha community declare this and emphatically state that we will not come in the way of the progress of our untouchable brothers. On the contrary we feel fully sympathised with the efforts of our untouchable brothers. It is our sincere opinion that if our untouchable brothers make efforts in lawful manner their days of progress are not far off.

In case of Satyagraha we will remain neutral and we have passed a resolution to that effect on 21-12-27.

Recently the court has issued prohibitory order against

the Satyagraha and there are 9 Maratha members who have declared to be participants but the Maratha community has not given them the consent.

Signatures

Narayan Mama Mangade, Painter

Kondiram Pandurang Shinde

Kisan Baba Dhumal

Tukaram Savalaram Pansare

Krishnaji Gyanuba Pawar

Babajirao Madhavrao Dalvi

Sitaram Gopal Chaudhari

“This will show that the Marathas are not opposed to you. However the option of the Non-Brahmin Party is that the Satyagraha must be kept suspended until the court verdict comes out. The Collector Saheb is also of the same opinion. My opinion is that you should listen to these two parties.” After this Shri Subhedar Ghatge also said the same thing. He said that he himself is a pensioner. “Knowing well that my pension will be in a problem even then I came here from Poona to participate in the Satyagraha. But I must tell you one thing. I had come here to join the Satyagraha against the touchables. But these people are now trying to create rift between us and the government. Hence we should think seriously before launching the Satyagraha. If the government is adamant against us we would have thought otherwise about it. But from the speech of the Collector Saheb it does not seem to be so. He is fully sympathetic to us. Then why should we think of confronting the government? The enthusiasm which our people have shown here is absolutely unprecedented. And I congratulate you on that. With this amount of enthusiasm we are bound to succeed. But after seeing the changed circumstances you must maintain tolerance is my request to you. After this Dr. Ambedkar thanked the Collector and saw him off. But here it was noticed that there was no effect of the speech made by the Collector. Because after Collector’s departure when some people began making speeches the

people were not ready to listen the speeches of those who spoke in opposition to Satyagraha. But when Shri Krishnaji Davane and Miss Shantabai Shinde spoke in favour of the Satyagraha there was a loud clapping. This discussion went on upto 7 p.m. Then Dr. Ambedkar said that we will meet again in the night and take the decision tomorrow morning and with this he declared that the meeting is over.

Third Day

After the end of the second day meeting some selected people met in the night. After much discussion it was decided that they should go to the tank in procession passing through the city, take rounds around the tank. This was communicated to the Collector in the night itself. But who will propose this resolution in the next day meeting? The people felt that if Dr. Ambedkar proposes this resolution tomorrow in the meeting then only the people will listen the resolution and follow it otherwise not. Dr. Ambedkar agreed to propose this resolution next day in the meeting. When the meeting began for third day in the morning Dr. Ambedkar proposed the following resolution.

Resolution: "In fact this meeting was called to undertake Satyagraha against the touchables who do not allow untouchables to take water from the Chavadar tank but at the nick of the time the touchables brought the preventive order from the civil court and made this Satyagraha against the government instead of touchables. By taking this fact into account and the fact mentioned by the Collector in his speech that the government is in support of the struggle of the untouchables for their just rights this meeting is taking the decision that until the court decision comes out it is suspending the decision of launching the Satyagraha."

While proposing the resolution Dr. Ambedkar said that yesterday I had proposed the resolution that we must launch Satyagraha and today I am asking you to suspend the Satyagraha. On this you may think that I am a fickle minded man. But it is not like that. I am doing both these things after deep consideration. Yesterday I wanted to test your

determination for launching the Satyagraha. I am happy that I got the idea of your determination. Now there is no doubt about your determination in anybody's mind. I am now fully contended over your determined stand. There was a deficiency that you did not have the power of determination but you have now acquired that. This has made me fully satisfied. Now I am trying to dissuade you from launching the Satyagraha and I am doing this also with my full responsibility. When you have acquired strength in you there is no need of showing it immediately. It should be used when time demands it most urgently. After my deep thinking I came to know that we should not use our newly acquired power not at this stage. If we launch Satyagraha now it will be the Satyagraha against the government. If the government is adamant we should do Satyagraha against the government also. But think whether the government is adamant in this case. The government is sympathetic to our case then why should we create problem for the government? Another thing is that you know that the touchables are not at all sympathetic to our Satyagraha. The touchables are completely Non-co-operating us. The traders have stopped selling goods to us. Khots (hereditary government officers) have started detaching the lands from the untouchables. The touchable families have started putting the grazing animals of the untouchables in Kondwada(animal jail of the village). We have to come out of this harassment. To tide over this kind of harassment we will have to have the help of the government. The government is assuring us to give this help here. Hence the Satyagraha against the government in this situation is not worth doing. Therefore, you should listen to me and give your consent to the resolution. The people cannot tease you for this stand. The Collector Saheb himself has appealed to you. At the most some people will say that your leaders have hesitated. But you need not worry about this. At least I do not think like that. It is because of you I have retreated my steps back, and do not feel anything bad about it. On the contrary I am happy that my followers are in some steps ahead of me. Though I am asking you to suspend Satyagraha I am not asking you to stop here only. We should

not stop unless we capture the tank. You must note that I will not stop unless we get the tank opened for us. The people became very much disappointed after hearing this but they gave their consent quietly in order to respect the words of Dr. Ambedkar.

Huge Procession of the Satyagraha

The procession of the representatives went through the city. In the front of the procession there were 50 volunteers who had come from Bombay. Behind them there were 50 women who had come for the conference. Then four members in each line were arranged and the procession started going ahead. In March last after untouchables polluted the Mahad tank the touchables of Mahad had become more brave men of religion and showing shameless bravery went to jail for imprisonment. Now they should have become more arrogant as they had secured the preventive order from the civil court. But when the procession entered the city they all shut the doors of their houses. Not even a small child came on the road. Their leaders had already left the city. When the court gave its decision in their favour why should the touchables of Mahad become so much helpless was a big puzzle. How did all these cubs of lions become suddenly the children of cats is a big puzzle. The people of Mahad that were already in fear became further bewildered after seeing the huge procession that passed through the market area. Perhaps this was the first huge procession that the city of Mahad was witnessing. The city of Mahad had drowned in the slogans like victory to King George, The Fifth, victory to Mahad Satyagraha, victory to Gandhi, victory to Agarkar, victory to Lokhitwadi and victory to Eknath. The procession came to the corner of the Chavadar tank. From there the procession was partitioned into two divisions. One division went round the tank from one side and another division from another side and both the groups gathered together in pandal. This way they had surrounded the tank. After seeing this scene they thought that now only capturing the tank has remained. This was the utterance of the touchables of Mahad. Such spontaneous utterances were giving the impression of Shri Shivaji's soldiers called Mavalas.

The procession was so huge that it had started at 10:30 a.m. and continued upto 12 noon.

When the procession reached back to the place of the meeting the meeting began for its proceedings again. Shri Shivatarkar proposed the following resolution. This conference gratefully thanks the following touchables who helped the conference for its success.

- (1) A.V.Chitre
- (2) Surendranath Tipnis
- (3) Fateh Khan Saheb Mutholikar
- (4) Shantaram Raghunath Potanis
- (5) Keshavrao Deshpande and
- (6) G.N.Sahasrabudhe

In praise of these people Shri P.N. Rajbhoj, Shri More and Shri Vanamali spoke giving their biographical account. This thanksgiving was approved in loud applaud. Then Dr. Ambedkar told the gathering that yet some important issues are to be discussed and finalised. Therefore, there is a need of meeting again in the evening. Then the proceedings of the meeting came to be closed at 1 p.m.

Crowd of Women in the Afternoon

After the end of the meeting the people gathered here went to the pandal where the dining was arranged. Dr. Ambedkar retired to his office where his accommodation was also made. Even before he went inside his office a crowd of women reached there and stood in front of his office. These women had come there from different villages and some of them even from far off villages just to see him and have his glimpses. Some of them had left their small children at home and had come to Mahad as they were eager and inspired to have his glimpses. The crowd went on swelling in the evening. In that crowd an old woman after seeing Dr. Ambedkar began weeping. The people thought that some touchables must have beaten her. She said after enquiry that some anti-social people (touchables) told her some bad news about Dr. Ambedkar.

Then the people knew why was she weeping and also the reason of women rushing to Dr. Ambedkar's office. Dr. Ambedkar knew that they have all come due to their respect and regard for him and this is a good occasion to address them in order to give a piece of advice to them. Therefore he requested them to stay and attend the meeting in the evening. They all waited and attended the meeting in the evening.

Meeting in the Evening in Chambhar Locality

On account of the Satyagraha conferences at Mahad the Chambhar community of Mahad suddenly became awake. They deciding to organise a public meeting in their locality in the evening went to Dr. Ambedkar to invite him as a chief guest. Dr. Ambedkar accepted the invitation and went to Chambhar lane at 7:30 p.m. along with some of his workers. The Chambhars' population in Mahad is quite big in size. Therefore, the people had gathered in a big number for the meeting. Shri R.V. Vanamali, Shri Girijashankar Shivadas, Shri L.R. Chandorkar, Shri Govind Zipru Jadhav made their speeches in the beginning. Then Dr. Ambedkar stood up for his speech. He said that it is quite surprising that except one or two members of the Chambhar community others do not come forward to participate in the programme of Satyagraha. I really do not know why it is so. I do not understand why do you hesitate to co-operate with the Mahars. If you think that you alone can undertake the programme of Satyagraha, I think it is not possible. Because your population is very small. Hence the co-operation with Mahars who are big in the size of population is a need and necessity for you. That way you need not bother that by co-operating with the Mahars your caste will be polluted. Really speaking the people launching the Satyagraha are different people. They are the brave soldiers. The brave soldiers have no caste. This was accepted even in the military camp of the Peshwas who were the staunch followers of caste system. It was due to this the tent of the Sidnank Mahar was in the midst of the army of Maratha Sardars. Nobody insists that you should break your caste. Really speaking you are the well to do people. In fact you should help us in our endeavours. You can undertake the

Satyagraha of not delivering the shoes. You have such power in you but you do not use that power. I do not understand whether we call this as your laziness or your carelessness. You should first decide whether you want merely the material well-being or your humanity. Your luxury is worthless without your humanity. Self-supporting people like you must participate in the struggle of the untouchables for regaining their lost humanity. Earn this merit at least in part. If you participate in this struggle with Mahars you will also be immortal in the history of India. Otherwise your next generation will blame you as powerless people. After this speech Shri Shivatarkar said that since you are not participating in this struggle of the emancipation of the untouchables you are regarded as the timid people. You are not performing your duties. This work does not merely belong to the untouchables but it belongs to whole humanity. You are not participating in this work even though you are untouchables. It is shame on your part. You should not become Brahmanised. Co-operate in this and help the work. After this Shri P.N.Rajbhoj said that I am very unhappy that the Chambhars are becoming Brahmanised. I am still more unhappy after seeing the behaviour of some Mangs. The Chambhars are more well to do compared to other untouchables but they are not understanding their responsibility because they are uneducated. A calamity has fallen on the leaders of the untouchables today. Therefore, you should give up your feelings of hate and hatred. The casteism is a monster which you should forget and co-operate with the Mahars and be prepared for Satyagraha; there lies the advantage of all. After this Shri Sahasrabudhe said that Barr. Ambedkar born in your clan went to England and America and came back as a more learned man than the Brahmins. Therefore, eventhough I am a Brahmin I have become his disciple. You receive education, break the caste system and help the movement of the eradication of the untouchability. Dr. Ambedkar and myself sit together and eat our food together. Nothing has happened to me. Do not give any importance to eating and drinking together unnecessarily. Then Shri Vanamali said that he felt unhappy that these people

did not participate in the Satyagraha. You should not miss the opportunity of doing your duty. If you do your duty you will remain immortal in history. After serving the tea and thanking the Chairman the meeting was ended at 9 p.m.

Conclusion of the Conference of Satyagraha

The conference of Satyagraha started at 10 p.m. after the leaders returned from the Chambhar locality. After some programmes a resolution was proposed to present golden rings to Shri Wamanrao Patki and Kamlakar Tipnis, two young men of Kayastha community for their yeoman service to the Satyagraha committee. After some speakers spoke on the resolution Dr. Ambedkar spoke in the end. He said that the work of these two young men is quite befitting to their community. The Brahmins have made many times in the past their efforts to place them in the lower castes. But these stood against the plot of the Brahmins and checked their attempts. It is quite natural for the Kayasthas who have fought battles for social equality should participate in the untouchables' struggle for their emancipation. Then Shri Patki and Shri Tipnis spoke in response to their felicitation. Then the Chairman of the Mahad municipality Shri Surba Tipnis stood up for his speech. He explained in his speech how the services of the untouchables are absolutely essential for the protection of Hindu religion. Then Shri Shantaram Potnis said that even if all Gurjars (trader community) and Brahmins oppose the untouchables we will stand to help the untouchables with all our might. Even among our Kayasthas some old people are opposed to the struggle of the untouchables. But we care a flick for them. So long as the untouchables are not permitted to take water from the Chavadar tank I will also not use water from that tank. Then Dr. Ambedkar gave silver medals to those who had worked very hard to make the Satyagraha conference a success as a token of love for them.

Responsibility of Women in the Progress of Untouchables

Now the President by declaring that the work of the conference was over started for another work which was more important than earlier works. In addition that the programme

was so seriously conducted that everybody became seriously aware of his responsibility. The first programme in this was the speech addressed to women. As suggested to them in the afternoon all women freely and frankly came and sat in the pandal. Their sitting arrangement was made in the centre of the pandal. Referring to them Dr. Ambedkar said that he is extremely happy that they have all come here to attend the meeting. As family affairs are taken care of by both men and women similarly the social problems must be taken care of by both men and women with joint responsibility.

If only the men alone took care of the society's problems it will take more time. If women also participate in that work along with men it will speed up the progress of the work. Therefore, their co-operation is needed in all the work. Hence, you should attend such conferences regularly is my request to you. Really speaking the eradication of the untouchability is the work of the women instead of men. You have given birth to men. You know how we are treated. We are treated even lower than the animals. In some places our shadow also pollutes men other people get posts of prestige and honour in offices and courts. But we born from your womb are not even qualified to get the posts of peon in offices. We live with such a mean position in society. If anybody asks you that you know all this well even then why did you give birth to us what will be your answer? What is the difference between the children born to the touchable women who are sitting here and the children born to you? There is no difference between you and the Brahmin women in holding the character and you should think about it. You maintain your chastity as Brahmin women maintain. The courage, determination and tenacity which you have the same cannot be noticed in Brahmin women sometimes. When this is so then why should the children born to the Brahmin women be accepted everywhere whereas the children born to you are considered everywhere as the degraded human beings. Have you ever thought about this? I think that you have never thought about it. If you had thought about it you would have been the first people to come forward to participate in the Satyagraha instead of men coming first.

Our mistake is that we are born to you and it is due to that mistake we are undergoing the punishment of untouchability. Hence you should think that why it should be the crime to take birth from you and why it should be meritorious to take birth from the women of other caste. If you think about it then you will come to the conclusion that either you should stop giving birth to the children or you should struggle to liberate them. You must opt for one out of these two. You must determine that you will not lead such a degraded life. As men have determined to make progress in life you should also do that. Another thing I would like to tell you is that you should give up all old dirty practices. Really speaking there is no stamp on the forehead of the untouchables to recognise him that he is an untouchable. But the practices and customs of the untouchables are such that on that basis others recognise them immediately that they are the untouchables. These practices, in my opinion, have been forcibly imposed on us once upon a time. But under the English rule that kind of force is not possible. Due to the practices because of which, you are recognised as untouchables you should discard them at once. Your mode of wearing the Saree is an evidence of your being the untouchable. You must discard that mode of wearing the Saree. You must adopt that mode of wearing the Saree which is used by the upper caste women. For doing that you need no money to spend. Your wearing the necklaces of beads in your neck and bracelet in your wrist are also the signs of the identity of your caste. Such things neither adds anything to your look nor do these increase the life of your husband. If you want to use ornaments use the ornaments of gold otherwise do not use it at all. Take care to maintain cleanliness. You are the auspicious people in the family. You should see that nothing unholy happens in the family. The people have given up eating the flesh of dead animals from the month of March last. This is a matter of great happiness for us but if in anybody's house this old practice continues you should see that it is stopped. If you take it seriously this practice of eating carrion will completely come to an end. You should also take care to educate your daughters. Knowledge and education are not merely for the use of male members. Those are necessary for

women also. Our ancestors had already recognised this fact. Those who were in military service they unforgettably educated their daughters. If our next generations are to make progress then you must educate your daughters. The message which I have given to you here I hope you will not allow it to go in vain. You should not waste time in bringing this message in your practice. Before you go to your places tomorrow morning you see me with changed mode of wearing Saree and then go to your homes. Then only I will feel that my message has borne fruits. Then Shrimati Vithabai assured Dr. Ambedkar that they will all behave as per the advice that he has tendered.

The Progress of the Untouchables and the Responsibility of Their Caste Leaders

After explaining the responsibility of the women Dr. Ambedkar collected the caste leaders of the untouchables and said that they should be angry after hearing him. My father was the leader of our caste community. If I am wrong please excuse me. Our ancestors have done a good thing by producing the system of leaders to guide the community. Every society has its own customs and practices. And it is necessary that all members of that society have to follow those practices and customs. If some one violates these practices and customs of the caste then the caste Sabha or caste Panchayat in order to reform him punishes him either by boycott or by such other punishment. The society has given this power of punishing the culprit to you caste leaders called Metres. This shows how worthy you are in our society. You are both the judges and the preceptors of our community. Your lessons and judgments will mould the behaviour of the society. But the charge of the people against you is that you sometimes prove right things as wrong and wrong things as right. And because of this the wrong practices are growing in society and you are responsible for the growth of this tendency in society. Therefore, what I would like to tell you is that you should try to understand your responsibility. You must know the age in which you are living. You must know what you are required to do in this changed environment. By giving up outdated old practices you must adopt new practices. In fact you should use your weapon of

boycott against those who cling to the old practices and unhealthy traditions. If you are prepared to do this then only we will accept your leadership which you are holding hereditarily. If you are not interested in doing this then we will have to appoint new people interested in new ideas by removing you from your leadership. I have decided to call the meeting of all the Metres (hereditary caste leaders) to decide which rules our community people should follow in changed conditions. I hope you will enforce the decisions taken in that meeting.

After this Shri Shivatarkar proposed the last resolution in which he thanked all those who had come from the Marathi speaking area of Bombay Presidency for the purpose of Satyagraha at Mahad. One thing was established in the episode of Satyagraha at Mahad. It was not only the Satyagraha to solve the water problem of the untouchables of Mahad but it became the problem of the untouchables of the whole country. There was not a single District of the Marathi speaking people in Bombay Presidency from which the people had not come to participate in the Mahad Satyagraha. If the untouchables show this kind of unity among them then the eradication of the untouchability will not take much time. After Shivatarkar's speech all the resolutions were passed with clapping and the meeting ended at 1:30 a.m.

Dr. Ambedkar's speech referring to women made immediate impact on women. Before returning to their places next day morning women made changes in the mode of wearing their Sarees and then went away. By seeing their determination they were given 8 annas per head for blouse and bangles. There was similar impact on men also. They also removed their ornaments of rustic style from their ears and fingers and threw them off. Not only this but the Mahars who were doing the work of sweeping in the Mahad municipality tendered resignation and quit their work very next day.

The Entire Credit of this Conference Goes to Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha

For the purpose of Satyagraha at Mahad first of all the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha produced a corps of 50 young volunteers from the untouchable community. By preparing the plan of propaganda each of them was given a fixed area for their propaganda. The people who toured the districts, for propaganda sake and the members of the executive committee in Bombay did such a tremendous work in nine months that almost ten thousand people came to Mahad fully prepared to go to jail for the eradication of the untouchability. In order to make progress of the untouchables there have come up many institutions and organisations in Bombay Presidency. But among them none can be compared with Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha in matters of its work. Shri Rajbhoj who was with Mate's organisation of removal of untouchability and Shri Subhedar Ghatge who was in Depressed Classes Mission left them and both joined the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha is an indication of the work that the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha is doing. Other institutions were there merely for namesake but now their names are not at all heard. The Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha has not come into being merely for namesake; it has come into being to fulfill a mission. Therefore, its name has spread at least in the entire area of Bombay Presidency. There is a saying that the useful tree bears green leaves, this way the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha is going to do the tremendous useful work in coming days. Those among the Mahars and Mangs that were opposing the Sabha earlier are now ashamed of their stand and have declared that they support the Mahad movement.

Journey to Rayagad

After the end of the conference work local people and the people that had come from Bombay went back. But Dr. Ambedkar, Shivatarkar and some other 10 to 12 people remained behind with a view to visit the Rayagad Fort which is quite near to Mahad. In this group there were people like Shri Sahasrabudhe, Shri Chitre, Pradhan brothers of Bombay, Shri Kholwadikar, Gangavane, Gayakwad, Ganapat Buwa

Jadhav, Subhedar Ghatge, Rajbhoj etc. returned by 10 a.m. seeing the caves at Mahad. If any touchables meet them on their way instructing something to them about reform was also their programme. On their way the Mahars of the village named 'Pachpale' met them. Then these people calling them near asked them about their opinion on the Mahad Satyagraha. They said that it is an old tradition, we do not know anything much about it. However, the people call it as religion. The Brahmins have deceived us. Whatever they do we simply follow them. The women of the untouchable community came to meet them. They had absolutely changed the mode of wearing Sarees, ornaments etc. This was the immediate effect of Dr. Ambedkar's lecture at Mahad. After returning from caves they took their lunch and began their journey to Rayagad at 5 p.m. the car goes only upto the village Nata which is near the Rayagad Fort. The untouchable women of Nata had come to meet Dr. Ambedkar. There also a revolutionary change was noticed in their mode of living. Nandgaon was another village on way. The men and women of untouchable community of that village had also come to meet Dr. Ambedkar and others. After the tea party they started their onward journey to the village Pachad where the arrangement for their night halt was made. From Nandgaon to Pachad it was night journey which they performed by singing songs and shouting the slogan 'Shivaji Maharaj ki Jai' (Victory to Shivaji Maharaj) they reached Pachad at 9:30 p.m. The people of Pachad gave them a rousing welcome. After dinner they immediately went to bed as they were very much fatigued. They started climbing up the fort at 7 a.m. and reached the fort at 9 a.m. On way the slogans of victory to Shivaji Maharaj continued. They also tried to remove the small trees and plants grown around the canons and guns in order to make them visible to the visitors. Shripati Shedge, the peon of the Local Board had already come there. He gave them two rooms of the caravanserai built by the municipality opened. After an hour or so the breakfast sent from Pachad reached to them on the fort. Since they were very much hungry due to the climbing up of the fort they attacked the breakfast like anything and finished it within no time. After some rest they began their journey for seeing the various sites of the fort.

Shripati Shedge worked as their guide, he showed them the palace first. Then he took them through the market lane. Then he showed them Jagdeshwar temple and Maruti temple. Here some religious minded people placed some money as Dakshina, Shri Shedge took it. Then after seeing the meeting hall they went to see the tomb of Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji. Then they went to see the area of seven lakes and then the place of ammunition and the store of explosives. After seeing the Hirakani point and the dilapidated house of Rainak they returned back to caravanserai. Then they took their evening meals at 7 p.m. and immediately went to bed as they were very much tired after seeing the fort for which they had to do walking for the whole day.

Dangerous Occasion

In the mid-night at 12 when they were all fast asleep a man threw some water inside from the window and the water fell exactly on Dr. Ambedkar. To see who was the person two people went near the window. The man who was standing near the window whispered to them that they should be careful. Some 50 to 60 Marathas have come up the fort he said. Dr. Ambedkar awoke the other people who had slept. When they came out they saw some 10 to 15 people sitting with lamp in their hands. They thought that it is they who have come to attack Dr. Ambedkar and his men there. But when they went near them those men did not move from their place. After asking further they told they have come for Dr. Ambedkar and his men to protect them. When they were asked why they have come at this odd hours in the night on the fort, they told that they learnt that some Marathas are coming to the fort with guns to kill you, therefore, we the people from valley, have come to protect you. Then they realised that while working for the removal of untouchability what kind of eventualities they will have to face in future. Then the workers with Dr. Ambedkar began blaming him that inspite of their warning he is not keeping the pistol with him. They waited for their adversaries for two hours but none turned up. Therefore, they slept again. Next day, at 8 a.m. they began descending the fort. When they came near the main gate there they found about

100 people sitting there, after enquiry they came to know that for the protection of the people that had gone on the fort they were sitting there for the whole night. Their idea was to prevent the miscreants there only at the gate of the fort. They had kindled the fire and had collected the heap of pieces of stones. They had come from the long distance of 10 to 12 miles. They had come fully prepared with lathis, sickles and spears with them. The people who had come with Dr. Ambedkar were all surprised by seeing their faith and devotion in Dr. Ambedkar. It seems that the life of Dr. Ambedkar had become a cause of supreme sacrifice for them. Shouting the slogan in the name of Shivaji Maharaj they descended the fort. At the base of the fort there had gathered a large number of women to welcome him. It was found that the mode of living of the women had changed. The message of Mahad had, it seems, reached everywhere in the area. After welcoming him the women went back and these people returned back to Pachad. No sooner they retired after taking their wash the people from Maharwada came there and after seeing Dr. Ambedkar and old man started weeping. He uttered, that Baba the whole Maharwada was in great grief. Dr. Ambedkar consoled him and wiped his tears. After enquiry it was revealed that there was a truth in the rumour that they wanted to kill him by going on the fort. The version of some Mahars that had come on the fort was that some Marathas had gone out from the village with guns and other weapons in the evening and they did not return even after night-fall. Sensing some danger the Mahars alerted the Mahars in that area and they are alert even now in that area. But the people who wanted to kill Dr. Ambedkar did not come on the fort. It seems that some important people mediated and prevented them from coming to the fort. After hearing this they were all happy including Dr. Ambedkar thinking that their life is not that cheap now.

Advice to the Marathas

After taking refreshment at 12 noon these people thought that they should call the touchables of this area together and discuss with them to change their traditional outlook regarding the practice of untouchability. In pursuance of this they sent

Shri Shripati Shedge and some Mahars to touchables of Mahad to invite them to Maharwada. A man was also sent to Sandosi (a village) to invite Captain Jagtap. As per the invitation the Marathas of Pachad came to the Maharwada. The Muslims of Pachad had also come. Referring to the invited Marathas Shri Chitre and Sahasrabudhe gave their lectures on the unity of the Hindus. On behalf of the untouchables Subhedar Ghatge also spoke some words of advice to the assembled people. Meanwhile Captain Jagtap Saheb also came and he advised the Marathas that they must change since time is changing. After this programme Shri Shedge, Captain Jagtap and others took a decision that tomorrow they should collect all the people of this area together and Dr. Ambedkar should address them on the problem of the eradication of untouchability. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar and his group had to stay there at Pachad for that night. Invitations with signatures of Shri Shedge and the Police Patil of Pachad were sent to 24 villages, Captain Jagtap and Subhedar Ghatge themselves went to some villages to reach the invitation. The wording of the invitation was as follows.

This is to inform that the leader of the Mahar caste Dr. Ambedkar has come to our village (Pachad). Taking advantage of this occasion we have organised a public meeting at Pachad to hear what he has to say on behalf of the Mahars and what the Marathas have to say to him and by consulting this way with each other and to find out if any compromising solution is there. The meeting will take place on Saturday dated 31-12-27 at 9 a.m. under the Chairmanship of Captain Sakharamrao Jagtap. In this meeting Dr. Ambedkar Saheb will address the people on behalf of the Mahar caste. Therefore, you must attend the meeting to hear what he says and also communicate your views to him. Therefore, you should attend the meeting with all other Marathas of your village.

Yours Sincerely,

1) Narayanrao Pawar,
Police Patil

2) Shripat Bhagoji Shedge

The meeting was to take place at 9 a.m. but nobody turned up upto 12 noon. At one p.m. some 4-5 Marathas came and then came Captain Jagtap and Subhedar Ghatge. They related that the Marathas will first meet in their villages and take some decision after discussion and then they will come if Dr. Ambedkar calls them. Then Captain Jagtap told them that the proposed meeting will not take place. Then these people began their journey to Mahad. Meanwhile the Police department also became alert by knowing the conspiracy against Dr. Ambedkar. Many people of untouchable caste had waited on the way in their journey back to Mahad to welcome them and also to see them off. It was the sign of a big awakening that the Mahad episode had generated in them.

Mischief of the Kolaba Samachar to Instigate the Caste Hindus

The paper 'Kolaba Samachar' had printed the information in its two issues about what happened on the Rayagad fort. In the issue of 7th January the Editor published some information under the title 'Dr. Ambedkar's invasion of Rayagad Fort'. The paper stated that Dr. Ambedkar threatened the peon on the fort Shri Shripati Shedge and polluted almost all the lakes and the temples on the fort. In the issue of 21st January the Editor made the peon on the fort to speak that Dr. Ambedkar went to the fort and sat on the throne of Chhatrapati Shivaji and the people who were with him touched his feet and said to him that this Hindu kingdom is yours. It is only the Kolaba Samachar knows its meaning because we find the Hindu kingdom nowhere existing. The Kolaba Samachar has published all this cooked story under the title 'The Play of Dr. Ambedkar'. Those who know Dr. Ambedkar will never believe in this fabricated story of the Kolaba Samachar. Dr. Ambedkar and his followers regard that the use of public tanks and public temples as their right. It is true that while trying to establish this they do not bother for consequences. Everybody must know that while making efforts to establish their claim Dr. Ambedkar and his followers will never behave in an undisciplined manner. This should have been known to the anti-social man like the Editor of the Kolaba Samachar. This

Editor had himself seen how disciplined were the people that had collected themselves at Mahad for Satyagraha with his own naked eyes. There were ten thousand people gathered at Mahad but there was not a single Police there to supervise them. These ten thousand people had determined that they will go to the jail but will not return without drinking water from the Chavadar tank. The Collector knew all this but even then he permitted the people to take out the procession in the city. Not only this but he permitted the procession to go round the tank. Because Collector was absolutely sure that these people will go to the tank but will not touch the water. Therefore, he did not even issue the preventive order in the tank area. On the contrary the Collector stated that he believes in the words of these people. The people in the procession also stood true to their words. Some people in the procession knew that the Collector Sahab has not issued the preventive order. Even then everybody in the procession considered that obeying the order and maintaining the discipline was his sacred duty. Among these ten thousand people there was not a single person who either violated the discipline or broke the order. A wicked man thinks that the whole world is wicked. Duryodhan did not find a single virtuous man in the world. The example of the Editor of Kolaba Samachar is worst than the example of Duryodhan. Because even after seeing the honesty of character of Dr. Ambedkar and his people this sinning man is trying to do the mud-throwing on Dr. Ambedkar. The Editor of Kolaba Samachar did not forget his wickedness in printing wrong information about the Mahad conference. While giving the wrong information he has stated that while burning the Manusmriti he asked permission to speak against the burning but permission was not granted to him. In reality the President of the conference did not prevent anybody from speaking what the President said was that if anybody wants to ask any question he can do so. If it is possible for him to answer he will do that. But by giving permission to opposition party to speak I do not want to convert this conference into a debating body, he stated. Accepting this advice of the President somebody asked a question that "Can you tell me that to which caste Manu belonged?" The President

answered him very clearly. He said that 'Kesari' says he was a Kshatriya, Pune Samachar says he was a Brahmin. We have nothing to do with his caste. If it is proved that he was an untouchable then instead of burning his Smriti we would have burnt his effigy into ashes for he betraying his own caste. Ignoring this fact this lie-selling Editor says that he was not allowed to speak. Since it is his nature to sell all lies through his writing it is not surprising if he writes all false things about Dr. Ambedkar's visit to Rayagad fort. His writing has no consistency. Once he says that Dr. Ambedkar burnt the Manusmriti because he failed to launch the Satyagraha. Again he says that since he was unable to launch the Satyagraha he did all sorts of polluting things on Rayagad fort. He writes that nobody came for the meeting to hear Dr. Ambedkar. The Editor knew the reason. Some people including Shedge propagated for not attending the meeting in villages. Perhaps by knowing well that Brahmins and Banias are not capable to harm Dr. Ambedkar he must have played the mischief of instigating the Marathas in this area. The Kolaba Samachar and such other Brahmin papers should remember that they cannot do anything to Dr. Ambedkar by hatching the plot against him nor are they capable to do any harm to his life.

The newspaper in Satara called 'Prakash'(light) has also followed the footsteps of Kolaba Samachar. It says that if Dr. Ambedkar wanted to go to the fort he should have informed the Marathas of that area. This is another example of foolishness. Rayagad is a historical fort. The people go there to see the historical monuments. Dr. Ambedkar and his men went there to the fort with the same purpose. Where was the need of informing any people?

The Mischievous Work of the Touchables of Mahad to Destroy the Proof

Dr. Ambedkar and his accompanists started from Pachad to Mahad and reached Mahad at 7 p.m. They had decided to start for their journey to Bombay on the same night. But after reaching Mahad they learnt that the stone on which the letters were engraved showing the ownership of the Municipality on

the Chavadar tank has been removed. It was not possible for Dr. Ambedkar to leave Mahad unless this issue is tackled. Hence Dr. Ambedkar, Shri Chitre, Shri Sahasrabudhe and Shri Shivatarkar remained there and the rest returned to Bombay. Next day the information that the engraved stone was broken has been informed to the Police and the President of the Mahad Municipality. They were requested to come personally and see the fact. Dr. Ambedkar, Police officer and the officers of the Municipality saw the stone on the sight. They saw that the stone was broken. They wanted to take the photo of the broken stone but no photographer was available to take the photo. Then they prepared the report called Panchnama(inquest). Then Dr. Ambedkar and others left Mahad at 5 p.m. and came to the village 'Veer' where the people had invited them.

Wel-Come at Veer

They found that the people of Veer were much enthusiastic and advanced. They were also found much advancement in education. After their wel-come by students singing the welcome song the food was served to them. Then the public meeting of both men and women was organised. After the Kirtan (singing the song of God with music instruments) of Ganapat Buwa Jadhav Dr. Ambedkar gave his lecture. In his lecture he advised both men and women for improving the way of living. Next day they started their journey to Bombay by car early in the morning. On their way the Muslims of the village 'Gandharpala' welcomed them. After tea party there they left Gandharpala and came to the village 'Dharmatar'. From here they sailed by boat and reached Bombay on 2nd January at 2 p.m. Since Rayagad news had already reached Bombay many people had come to the port. Then after welcoming Dr. Ambedkar and others they went back to their homes.

A Claim for Chavadar Tank
A Complaint
In the Court of Second Sub-Judge at Mahad
Plaintiffs

1. Pandurang Raghunath Dharap, Caste Brahmin, occupation - Trader, age -62, Mahad
2. Narhari Damodar Vaidya, Caste Brahmin, occupation Vaidic Brahmin, age- 75, Mahad
3. Ramnarayan Giridhari Marwadi, caste - Marwadi, occupation - trade, age - 65, Mahad
4. Ganapat Bhiku Gandhi Gujar, caste - Gujar, occupation-trade, age - 55, Mahad
5. Balkrishna Narayan Bagde, Caste tailor, occupation - trade, age- 45, Mahad
6. Narayanrao Anandrao Deshpande, caste -CKP, occupation - writer, age - 70, Mahad
7. Ramchandra Dharmaji Jadhav, caste- Maratha, occupation - trade, age - 35, Mahad
8. Maruti Sitaram Vadke, caste - coppersmith, occupation - agriculture, age - 42, Mahad
9. Ramchandra Atmaram Shete, caste - Vaishya-trader, occupation- trader, age 27, Mahad

Against

1. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, M.A.,Ph. D. S.C., Bar at Law, M.L.C., caste - Mirasi, occupation - Pleader age - 40
 2. Shitaram Namdeo Shivatarkar, caste - Mirasi, occupation - service, age - 40
- Defendant no. 1 and 2 are from Bombay, Damodar Hall, Parel.
3. Kulanak alias Krishna Sayanak Mahar, caste - Mirasi, occupation, military pension, age - 50, Mahad
 4. Ganya Malu Chambhar, caste - Chambhar, occupation - trade, age - 65, Mahad
 5. Kanu Vithal Mahar, caste - Mirasi, occupation - agriculture, age - 65, Mahad

Suit Rs. 10

We the plaintiffs inform the following :

1. In the city of Mahad, which is a Taluka place, District Kolaba there is a water tank called Chaudhari and the tank is surrounded by the agricultural land and also a municipality road upto the tank from the city. Beyond this road there is a touchables locality. This tank has been constructed long ago, since this tank has been constructed long ago therefore, sufficient information about it is not available. However, the social system prevailing at the time of its construction, the use of the tank till today by the touchables, the private lands surrounding the tank etc. prove that the tank is not a private property. Some private person constructed this tank for the use of the touchables. And hence it is being used only by the touchables till today. The untouchables have never made use of this tank till to this date, nor were they allowed to use it. This is the situation that exists from very olden days.
2. When Mahad Municipality was established it saw that the many touchables use the water from the tank both for drinking purpose and for other purposes. It began supervising it for the cause of the health of the users. But the land around the tank is privately owned hereditarily by the owners of the lands. Not only this but there is a wall compound around the tank and the each portion of the wall has been built by the respective farmer in his own area. If any portion of wall is dilapidated then that portion is rebuilt by the farmer in whose land the dilapidated wall was built. Each farmer has his own private passage in his land to enter the tank. This way this tank is of the nature of private property. The untouchables have never drawn water from this tank nor were they ever allowed to draw water from this tank. The untouchables have never staked their claim of right over this tank right from the ancient past.
3. The Mahars, Dhors, and Chambhars are the untouchable castes that stay at Mahad from very olden days. In the western area of Mahad town there is a Maharwada (Mahar locality) where Mahars stay and this locality is cut off from

the touchable area. There are 10 to 15 houses of Mahars. For the use of Mahars coming from outside, the Mahad municipality has built a Dharmashala (building for the use of the travelers). Outside the end of the Mahad city in the east there is a Chambhar locality. It is in separation of the city. In this Chambhar locality there are 60 to 75 houses of Chambhars and Dhors. The Mahars, Chambhars and other such castes have been following the practice of untouchability among themselves since olden days. In Chambhar colony a well is constructed for their use and it is now as a public well in the charge of the municipality for the use of Chambhars. There is also a private well in Chambharwada. There is also a public well in Maharwada for the use of the Mahars. This well is also in the charge of the municipality. In addition, to this in the locality of touchables there are some wells and tanks since the touchable locality is very big. Out of these wells and tanks some are in use and some are not.

4. According to the religious scriptures of the Hindus the Hindu society has been divided into two divisions of touchables and untouchables since hoary past. Though both touchables and untouchables are Hindus in religious understanding and practice these two sections in every religious and social matters have been staying separately from very ancient days. The touchables and the untouchables do not touch each others and they also do not touch each others wells and tanks. Not only this but even the shadow of the untouchables is thought as inauspicious by the touchables. This religious feeling and practice is the very blood of the Hindu society and hence both the parties have strictly adhered to these practices. The time when these religious restrictions and practices were already under strict observation it is during that time the 'Chaudhari' tank has been built and hence the untouchables have no connection of any kind with the tank. The untouchables never went against these practices and claimed for taking water from the Chaudhari tank. The touchables also never allowed the untouchables to take

water from the tank. This way both parties maintained their position quite peacefully in connection with the Chaudhari tank. But suddenly on 19th March, 1927 at 12 noon the pleader No. 1 of the Defendant Party with 1500 people with him entered the tank and washed their feet, mouth and drew water from the tank. This way the untouchables went there forcibly in big number and hurt the religious feelings of the touchables greatly. Therefore, the touchables; men, women, and children have stopped going to the tank from 19th March, 1927 thinking that going to the tank now will be irreligious act. Almost half the city of Mahad depended on the water from this tank. The people are now suffering from the dearth of water there. Next day the purificatory ceremony was performed on the water of the tank as per the suggestions made by the religious books and from 1 p.m. the touchables began using the water. The untouchables after committing the atrocity by drawing water, the news was that they entered the temple of God Vireshwar and there took place the fighting between touchable youths and the untouchables in the market place. This was reported to the Police. The Police made some arrests and 4-5 people were punished. It is only on this basis under the leadership of defendant no. 1 a Satyagraha committee has been formed and with their (committee members) signatures a pamphlet unsigned has been distributed among the untouchables of Kolaba District. In the pamphlet some wrong information is given. There it is stated that in the Fauzdari case the accused have been punished, this has vindicated the untouchables right to go to the tank. The right which has now been established by law and it only remains to be established by us by our practice. The meeting of the untouchables that has been called on 25th December, 1927 has been done so only to bring this practice in operation. By making the wrong statements about the decision of the Fauzdari case that it has established the right of the untouchables over the tank the efforts have been made to deceive the people. In this way by breaking the age-old practices to start the new

practices in their place the meeting has been called at Mahad on 25th December, 1927. This information became known some 15 days back through the openly distributed pamphlets. Therefore, the Chaudhari tank is a private tank of some people and it has been so far used only by the touchables and this is in practice since very long. The untouchables have no right to draw water from there nor can they go there. Therefore, no untouchable should go there and take water from there. This warning should be issued to them. Hence the complaint has been made.

5. The touchables who have the right to draw water from the Chaudhari tank it is on their behalf and for their benefit the disputants have lodged the complaint. Since it is not possible to make all the touchables the disputants it is only from 1 to 9 have been made the complainers with the permission of the court and the court has accepted it. Similarly, it was inconvenient to make all the untouchables defendant, it is only from 1 to 5 members that have been made the party to defend on behalf of all the untouchables and this has also been made with the permission of the court.
6. The untouchables have no right to start a new practice of drawing water from the Chaudhari tank. They are making necessary efforts to harm the religious feelings of the touchables. The untouchables taking water from the tank is not a practice which has continued from the ancient past. Therefore, the touchables object to their doing so. If the untouchables start drawing water from the tank the entire tank is going to be useless. Since there is no bigger source of water than the Chaudhari tank it is likely that for want of water the touchables might start evacuating the city. Therefore, unless the untouchables are strictly prevented from coming to tank the rights of the touchables will not be safe in any way.
7. The cause of this complaint is the pamphlet issued by the leaders of the untouchables on 25th November, 1927 and this happened in the court area at Mahad.

8. The stamp of Rs. 10 has been attached to the complaint application and it is this which is fixed as court fee.
9. The complainers request is
 - (1) The above mentioned Chaudhari tank is of the nature of the private property of the touchables. Only the touchables have the right to take water from the tank, the untouchables have no right to take water from there. The untouchables therefore, should be warned that under no circumstances they should go there.
 - (2) The expenditure of this litigation should be extracted from the defendants. The court should issue order in this matter and in any other matter which the court thinks appropriate.

Date 12-12-27
Sathe Vakil (Pleader)

Signatures of Plaintiff
Signed

The True Copy
Application for Preventive Order in the Court of
Sub-Judge
At Mahad

Plaintiffs

- (1) Pandurang Raghunath Dharap
- (2) Narhari Damodar Vaidya
- (3) Ramnarayan Giridhar Marwadi
- (4) Ganapat Bhikuseeth Gandhi
- (5) Balkrishna Narayan Bagde
- (6) Narayan Anantrao Deshpande
- (7) Ramchandra Dharmaji Jadhav
- (8) Maruti Shivaram Vadke
- (9) Ramchandra Atmaram Shete

All belonged to Mahad

In Opposition – Defendants

- (1) Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar
- (2) Shitaram Namdeo Shivatarkar
- (3) Kutananak alias Krishna Sayanath Mahar, Kijloli
- (4) Gunya Malu Chambhar, resident of Mahad
- (5) Kanu Vithal Mahar, resident of Mahad

Suit

The Plaintiffs Made the Following Application

In the city of Mahad there is a Chaudar tank situated in the locality of the touchables. This Chaudar tank right from the beginning is of a private nature and is in a private land. The area around the tank is a private land. The stone construction around the tank from all sides is privately done and privately owned. This is a very old tank built up during the reign of earlier government. Only touchables have been using the water of this tank from very olden days. Therefore, it is only the touchables who have their right over the water of this tank. Hence the untouchables have neither the right to take water from the tank nor have they any right to go there. The order to this effect may be issued to the untouchables. This kind of complaint has been made by the touchables against the untouchables. According to the Hindu religious feelings and practices the touchables think that the water touched by the untouchables is polluted and they should not use it. Therefore, from very ancient times water resources for both touchables and untouchables are separately maintained. The water resources are separately maintained in Mahad also. When this is the system working very smoothly suddenly on 19th March, 1927 under the leadership of defendant no. 1 some 1000 to 1500 untouchables came there to the Chaudhari tank at 12 noon and washing their feet and hands carried the water from the tank thus polluting the water.

Since the water touched by the untouchables is prohibited to be used by the touchables according to the injunction of the

Hindu Dharma Shastra (treaties) the tank at Mahad touched by the untouchables remained deserted for 24 to 25 hours and the touchables at Mahad suffered for want of water much. But on 20th March, 1927 the purificatory rite was performed on the tank as per the dictation of the Hindu Dharma Shastra by incurring heavy expenditure and then the touchables began using the water. Thinking that the untouchables will not do any such injustice against the touchables did not do any remedial provision for the future. But again the untouchables after 7 to 8 months have published an undated pamphlet that they will come again and pollute the water of the tank. The pamphlet has been signed by the President and the secretary of the defendants. This makes the issue clear that the untouchables have decided to make a fresh beginning. If the untouchables are allowed to do this then the practice of using the tank by the touchables from the ancient past will be discontinued and the touchables will have to suffer from the want of water perpetually. The purification of the water is a very expensive ceremony. Therefore, this remedy is also not very much practical. It is also of no use to give warning to the defendants again and again. Under the circumstances it is requested that until the judgment is given on the litigation the defendants should be warned to maintain the status quo. The date 12th. December, 1927

True Copy

Signatures of the Applicants

Order

This is an application asking the court to grant to the applicants a temporary injunction restraining the opponents from going to Chaudar tank or taking water therefrom. The applicants have, on 12th December 1927, filed in this court Regular Suit No. 405 of 1927 for obtaining a declaration that the said Chaudar tank is of the nature of private property of the touchable classes only and that the untouchable classes have no right to go to that tank nor take water therefrom and also for obtaining a perpetual injunction restraining the defendants from doing any of these acts.

The applicants by this application, pray that pending the disposal of the suit a temporary injunction may be issued against the defendants. The application states, among other things that hundreds of years since the tank has been in the exclusive enjoyment of the touchable classes only, that on 19th March 1927, a number of persons of the untouchable classes led by defendant, all of a sudden entered the tank, washed their hands and faces with the water and thus contaminated it, that in consequence of this contamination the touchable classes could not take water from the tank for over 24-25 hours i.e. until the water was purified, at a great cost, by performing ceremonies laid down by the Hindu Shastras, that great hardship was thus caused to the touchable classes, that the untouchable classes have issued a manifesto proclaiming their intension of again entering the tank and taking water therefrom, that if they are allowed to do that, the touchable classes will be debarred, by the Shastras, from using the water of the tank, that serious hardship would thus result to them and that if a temporary injunction as asked for is not granted and the defendants allowed to contaminate the water of the plaintiffs even if they finally succeed in the suit would not reap the benefits of the decree.

The application is supported by the affidavits of several persons besides plaintiff no.1 Plaintiffs have also produced with exhibit 4a notice issued by the Municipality against one Divakar Joshi (one of the persons making an affidavit) calling upon him to repair his stone Dhakkas (dams) which adjoined the side of the Chavadar tank, and also a deed of portion of the Dharap family alleged to be more than a hundred years old. This deed contains a reference of the Pal of the tank as being one of the properties partitioned. Both these documents raise a prima facie presumption of the tank being private property.

The question now is, whether it would be more just to grant a temporary injunction or refuse it. The law regarding temporary injunction is contained in order 39 of the Civil Procedure Code Rule 1 of this order is as follows:- where in any suit it is proved by affidavit or otherwise

- (a) That any property in dispute in suit is in danger of being wasted, damaged or alienated by any party to the suit, or wrongfully sold in execution of a decree or
- (b) That the defendant threatens, or intends to remove or disposes off his property with a view to defraud his creditors, the court may by order grant a temporary injunction. Clause (b) has obviously, no application to the present case. The present case appears to come within clause (a)

Here is a tank which has, for years since, been in the exclusive enjoyment of the touchable classes. The manifesto issued over the signatures of defendant 1 and others also shows that the untouchable classes were upto now under the impression that they had no right to access to the tank. It thus appears that the tank has been until now in the exclusive enjoyment of the touchable classes. The question now is, whether the ends of justice would be better met by disturbing this old state of things or by allowing it to continue until the rights of the parties have been finally decided.

The principles governing temporary injunctions have been summarised under part 2 of the Mulla's commentary on the Civil Procedure Code, 8th edition, page 892. One of these is that the court must see that there is a bona fide contention between the parties. About this, there appears to me to be very little doubt. The second principle is, "On which side in the event of success, will lie the balance of inconvenience if the injunction does not issue". To me it appears that the balance of inconvenience will lie, and lie very heavily on the side of the plaintiffs if an injunction is not issued. The point is so clear that I do not think I need labour it at all. If the defendants are allowed to enter the tank and thus according to the religious notions of the plaintiffs contaminate the water and render it unfit for further use, a large section of the population will be put to hardship and inconvenience which will be so severe that only those living in places where there are no copious supplies of water can realise it. On the other hand the defendants will not be put to any inconvenience whatsoever,

if they are asked to forbear from exercising what they consider to be their right, until the first decision of the suit. This course appears to me not only just and equitable, but the only right course under the circumstances in order to maintain the status and which, it is imperative to do bide the remark appearing at 1 L.R. 46 Calcutta, page 1030.

It is also contended by the applicants (plaintiffs) that if a temporary injunction as asked for is not granted and the water of the tank is allowed to be contaminated irreparable injury would result to the plaintiffs. Taking into consideration how sensitive the touchable classes generally are on this point, both on account of their religious susceptibilities, as well as the wide gulf which has existed between the two communities from time immemorial. I am inclined to attach very great weight to this condition. I have no doubt that the spread of education will, in course of time, materially alter these conditions and bring the two communities into a closer and friendly contact with each other and that untouchability will be a thing of the past. But, as things at present stand, I am bound to attach great weight to the sentiment of the applicants who feel that, the injury that they will sustain if the water is allowed to be contaminated, will that it would not admit of being adequately compensated by damages.

Taking all these circumstances into consideration, I think I would be failing in duty if I were to refuse the injunction prayed for. It is a very painful duty that I am called upon to perform, but the call of the duty leaves no room for choice. I therefore, order that a temporary injunction as asked for, with notice do issue.

14-12-27

Sd. G.V.Vaidya

Temporary Injunction Order
(Civil Procedure Order 39, rule 1)
Second Class Sub-Judge

Mahad Court RDM No. $\frac{405}{1927}$

Plaintiff

1. Pandurang Raghunath Dharap, Mahad
2. Narhari Damodar Vaidya, Mahad
3. Ramnarayan Girdhari Marwadi, Mahad
4. Ganapat Bhiku Gandhi, Mahad
5. Balkrishna Narayan Bagde, Mahad
6. Narayan Anandrao Deshpande, Mahad
7. Ramchandra Dharmaji Jadhav, Mahad
8. Maruti Shitaram Vadke, Mahad
9. Ramchandra Atmaram Shete, Mahad

In Opposition

Defendants

1. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, Bar- at- law, Mumbai, Parel
2. Shitaram Namdeo Shivatarkar, Mumbai, Parel
3. Kutnak alias Krishna Sayanak Mahar of village Kinjloli
4. Ganya Malu Chambhar, Mahad
5. Kanu Vithal Mahar, Mahad

Suit Rs. 10

After considering the application made by the Pleader Mr. Govind Vinayak Sathe on behalf of the plaintiff Pandurang Raghunath Dharap the court order (13-12-27) that until issuing the second order no untouchable should go to the Chaudar tank or to take water from the tank. Hence the untouchables are warned very strictly.

This order is issued on 19-12-27 putting my signature on the seal of the court.

V. D. Oka

Y. R. Deshpande
Clerk of the Court

Public Notification

(Civil Procedure Code Order 1 rule 8)

Court of the Second Class Sub-Judge Mahad

Court Register $\frac{405}{1927}$

Plaintiffs

1. Pandurang Raghunath Dharap, Mahad
2. Narhari Damodar Vaidya, Mahad
3. Ramnarayan Girdhari Marwadi, Mahad
4. Ganapat Bhiku Gandhi, Mahad
5. Balkrishna Narayan Bagde, Mahad
6. Narayan Anandrao Bagde, Mahad
7. Ramchandra Dharmaji Jadhav, Mahad
8. Maruti Shitaram Vadke, Mahad
9. Ramchandra Atmaram Shete, Mahad

Opposed By

1. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, Bar- at- law, Mumbai, Parel
2. Shitaram Namdeo Shivatarkar, Mumbai, Parel
3. Kutnak alias Krishna Sayanak Mahar of village Kinjloli
4. Ganya Malu Chambhar, Mahad
5. Kanu Vithal Mahar, Mahad

Suit Rs. 10

The argument of the plaintiffs is that the Chaudar tank at Mahad is of a private nature and only the touchables have their right to draw water from the tank and in no circumstances the untouchables have any right to go to the tank and take water from the tank. This is the practice that has come down from ancient days. Hence the tank under reference is of a private nature and only the touchables have their claim over it. The party of the plaintiffs have gone to the court at Mahad in litigation and requested the court and the court has given permission to the plaintiffs to proceed in the court against the

defendants 1 to 5 to prevent them from going to the tank permanently. The hearing of the case has been fixed on 22 January, 1928. Anybody interested in this law suit either for or against should remain present in the court at 11 a.m.

This notice has been issued by us with our signature and the seal of the court on 19th December, 1927.

V.D. Oka

Y. R. Deshpande

Clerk of the Court

Self-Introduction

Public Meeting of the Untouchables at Tryambakeshwar, A Holy Place

(From Our Correspondent)

On the occasion of the Saint Nivruttinath festival a large number of untouchables gather there at Tryambakeshwar every year. Taking advantage of the situation the handbills were distributed regarding the public meeting to be organised as a part of producing social awakening among the untouchables. Accordingly the meeting was organised on 18th January. Dr. Ambedkar presided over the meeting. The meeting was the huge gathering of men and women and the women attendance was very much big. Though the purpose of the meeting was whether they should construct the temple of saint Chokoba at Tryambakeshwar or not Dr. Ambedkar explained almost all the problems that the untouchables confront everyday. He categorically explained that instead of constructing the temple it is necessary to carry on the work of amelioration of the untouchables which the saint Chokoba had started. And that will be his real monument. He further said that they can do that by donating the money to the fund of the paper, Bahishkrit Bharat. After him Shri Bhaurao Gaikwad, Shri Bhalerao, Shri Punjaji Navasaji Jadhav etc. made their speeches. Its impact was that there on the spot itself only Rs. 203 were received as a donation to the press fund. The women

and the Sadhus(saints) who did not know ABCD of social work came forward and donated to the fund. It was decided that the meeting must end at 4:30 p.m. to pave the way for joining the process of palanquin (it was a practice of placing the image of deity in palanquin and it was taken in procession carrying it on shoulders one by one. This was a holy function.) It was for this purpose that the meeting was started at 2 p.m. The meeting would have ended at 5 p.m. only but Shri Datar Shastri of Nasik and the Editor of the paper 'Swarajya' Shri Marathe came there at the nick of the time and it was seen that the people were more interested in the meeting than in the procession of the palanquin and the meeting continued by common consensus. Shri Datar Shastri and Shri Marathe spoke on the occasion expressing their sympathy for the movement of the untouchables. When the speeches were going on there came Shri Thorat, Vandekar and Shri Chaudhari of Jalgaon. They also spoke in the meeting. Shri Thorat said it clearly in his speech that it is wrong to tell the untouchables that they should stand on their own legs. It is the touchables who should make their efforts to remove the untouchability of the untouchables. Then Shri Bhaurao Gayakwad spoke and he refuted almost all the arguments made by earlier speakers about the untouchables and their untouchability. Then Dr. Ambedkar said in his concluding speech that the touchable leaders instead of coming here and making their speeches should organise the meetings of the touchables and try to produce sympathy in them for the movement of the untouchables. He told the Maratha leaders especially that instead of calling the meetings in the city they should go to the villages and organise the meetings of the Marathas there. Because the condition which we saw of the Marathas in Kolaba District is of a very rustic nature. You must make your efforts to reform them. Then ended the meeting and it ended with joy and happiness. When this was the actual position the Editor of the paper 'Swarajya' twisted the speech made by Dr. Ambedkar and gave a wrong meaning to it in his criticism. Those who had attended the meeting felt after reading the paper that the Editor must be a mad man. Hence there is no use of writing anything on him.

Respected Doctor Saheb

Today is a Sankranti day (a Hindu festival that falls on 14th January every year) and I am sending Tilgul (sweet seeds) kindly accept it.

I read the burning of the Manusmriti in Mahad Satyagraha. It is this kind book which are really responsible for the degradation of Hindu society. Hindu society remained devoid of humanity because of this book. I am congratulating you for your courage. But this should not end there only. We must get the law enacted about this. At least the portion which helps maintaining untouchability and works against humanity that portion must be removed from the book. Another thing I am suggesting very humbly is that the eating of the flesh of the dead animals must be forbidden by law. Wherever the untouchables give up eating the flesh of the dead animals there they are subjected to injustice and hardship. If the law is made on this it is going to be very much fruitful. In fact the eating of the dead animal's flesh is useful to these people because many avenues of earning the livelihood are closed for these people. I have come to know that this practice of eating the dead animal's flesh is persistent because of their poverty. Only one way is open to the untouchables and that is that they should either leave Hinduism or continue their struggle against the touchables. The struggle against the touchables is a very difficult solution. The path of revolution is open to almost all the communities but the problem of untouchables is very difficult. All their nerves are in the hands of the touchables. Therefore, undertaking any movement has become a difficult task. This condition is not found in the cities in that intensity but in villages the condition of untouchables is very much miserable. I have come to the firm conclusion that the way of liberation of the untouchables is not possible without sacrificing the blood.

You must have seen the separate writing in paper 'Bhala'.

It is courageous to say that such kind of writing does not make any impact on society. Only half a percent of people in India understand the real situation in the country. More than 99 percent of the people in the country are the worshippers of Brahmanism. Writing like the writings in 'Bhala' nourishes Brahmanism in the country. In Mahad episode who instigated the touchables to file a suit in the court? It is these Bhatjis who did it. Bhala's writing is responsible for the touchables going to the court for filing the suit. The Satyashodhaks are not wrong when they say that the Brahmins are wicked people. The Brahmins do not want the nation, nor the religion nor anything to prosper, if it is not under their dominance. It is they who are responsible for the degradation of the country. These national leaders in their editorials on Amirs of Afghan, write against the papers that support Peshwa rule but they never write on the movement of the untouchables and their struggle against untouchability.

My heart is burning after seeing all this condition. Here the condition of untouchables is very much miserable. Some people by claiming to be the leaders are thriving on the labour of the poor masses. I am trying to collect subscribers for the paper Bahishkrit Bharat. At Lasur there is a temple. The people have decided to enter that temple. They are prepared to pay any cost for that. They have invited me to come. I am going to go there on 16th or 17th. I request you to please publish this letter of congratulating you.

Yours sincerely
Ramchandra Dattatray Raravikar

BAHISHKRIT BHARAT (Untouchable India)

New Planning for New Year

Next year the essays of Lokhitwadi* will be reprinted in our paper 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. Those who have read these essays alone know how much free and frank these essays are in views of socio-religious matter. In order to make these essays

available to the people we have collected these essays together with great difficulty. Similarly under the title 'Researches in Puranas'. What is there in six Shastras and 18 Puranas will be brought to the notice of the people through the series of articles in 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. Both these subjects are so much important that those who love social reform must not miss the reading of this literature. In addition to those there will be articles on other subjects written fearlessly as usual. In that also the articles on Pope in Europe and Shankaracharya in India will be worth reading. All this literature will be available only in three rupees. Hence by becoming the subscribers of the Bahishkrit Bharat the people should avail of this facility.

BAHISHKRIT BHARAT

(Untouchable India)

Supplementary

Founders of Religion Are the Incarnation of God

The Conference of Mahad Satyagraha

25th December, 1927

President: Dr. Bhimrao R. Ambedkar

M.A., Ph.D., D. Sc., Bar-at-Law, M.L.C.

Presidential Address

Gentlemen, by accepting the invitation of the Satyagraha committee you have all come here and hence as a President of the committee I extend my warm welcome to you all.

You must be remembering that on 19th of March last we had all come here and had collectively gone to the Chaudar tank. Though the touchables of Mahad did not show any opposition to our move in the beginning they subsequently by attacking the untouchables showed their opposition to it. The beating ended the way in which it was to be ended. The touchables who participated in beating were awarded with four month's rigorous imprisonment. And they are in jail now.

Were we not obstructed on the 19th March last by them it would have been established that the touchables have accepted our right of taking water from the tank and there would have been no need of organising this programme again. But unfortunately that did not happen. Hence we were compelled to call this meeting again. The Chaudar tank of Mahad is a public tank. The people of Mahad are such a wise people that they not only take water from the Chaudar tank for themselves but also allow the people of all the religions to draw water from the Chaudar tank. Therefore, even the Muslims, who belong to alien religion, also draw water from this tank. Not only this but even the animals born of the animal womb and are much lower than the human beings are also permitted to drink water from the tank. The animals belonging to the untouchables are also permitted to drink water from the tank. This way the touchable Hindus are the people of mercy and love. These touchable Hindus do not do any violence to anybody nor do they torture anybody. They are not a class of miserly and selfish people. Increasing number of saints and sacrificers among them is the evidence of their generosity. Helping others is the merit and harming others is the sin is their behaviour. Endure the sorrow produced by others without countering it is their temperament. Hence they mercifully behave with harmless creatures like cow, they similarly protect the harmful creatures like the serpents with their view that soul pervades. When this is so about the touchables the same touchables prevent the untouchables who are Hindus from taking water from the tank. Hence the question naturally arises that why do the touchables prevent untouchables only from taking water from the tank? Everybody, it is necessary, must understand the answer to this question. Without that I think, you will not understand the importance of this meeting. Among the Hindus as per their Shastras (book) there are four Varnas and as per their practice there are five Varnas and these five are Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaisya, Shudra and Atishudra. Varna system is the first rule among the rules of Hinduism. The second rule of the same rules is that these Varnas are unequal in their social status. The second is the lower than the first is their descending scale of degradation. According to this rule not only their status is

determined but to know everybody's status the limit of each Varna has also been determined. In Hindu religion the prohibition of inter-caste marriages, inter-dining, use of the utensils of others, and the mixing with each other are not merely the limits of association as people generally think. These limits are put to indicate the status of each individual. These limits of association are the indication of inequality in social status. If there is a crown on the head he is regarded as the king; if there is bow and arrow in his hands he is regarded as Kshatriya, similarly out of five conditions no restriction is put on him and he is regarded as best among all, is the Brahmana and those who are under the restriction of all the four, they are regarded as the lowest. They are trying to protect these five restrictions only because if it is not done so then by breaking these restrictions (inequality) there will be established the social equality. The touchables of Mahad are not allowing the untouchables to drink water from the Chaudar tank not because by their touch the water will spoil or it will evaporate but they are not allowing the untouchables to take water from the tank because they have no desire to establish that the caste which are lower have not become their equals. Gentleman you must have now known the meaning of the struggle that we have started here. Therefore, you should not take it that the Satyagraha committee has called you here only for the sake of Satyagraha. By drinking water from the Chaudar tank we are not going to become immortal. So far we did not drink water from the Chaudar tank and yet we have survived. To go to Chaudar tank is not only for the sake of drinking water. We are going there to prove that we are also human beings like all other human beings. This means that

This meeting has been called
For making an Auspicious
Beginning for equality

Is absolutely clear.

When we think about this meeting from this point of view undoubtedly this will be an unprecedented event in everybody's view, is my firm conviction. I do not think that

there is any parallel to this event in the history of India. If we try to find out any parallel to this event then we will have to go to the history of France. 138 years before the ruler of France Louis Sixteen had called the similar meeting of the peoples' representatives on 24th January, 1789. Some historians criticise this National Assembly of France. This assembly hanged both the King and Queen of France to death. This assembly also harassed upper class people and killed many of them and those that remained alive were ruined in life. They confiscated their property and for more than 15 years it produced wars in Europe. This is the charge against the National Assembly of France. In my opinion this criticism is improper. The real work which the French National Assembly did was not grasped by these critics. The work which the National Assembly did was that it not only blessed the France but it blessed the entire Europe. Today the European nations are enjoying the pleasure and prosperity, the reason for it is that they accepted the principles of social reconstruction suggested by the French National Assembly of 1789. The assembly forcibly implemented its principles in France and other nations of Europe also accepted its ideas and implemented them. There the social inequality was economic but it was severely intense. In short

There Is A Similarity In This Meeting And The Revolutionary National Meeting Of France That Met On 5th May, 1789.

There is a similarity not only between the two but there is much similarity in the objectives of both. The meeting of the French Assembly was called to produce unity among the people of France. This meeting is also called to produce unity among the Hindus. Of course before we discuss the principles on which this unity of the Hindus is brought about we must try to understand the policy that the French Assembly adopted and the principles that it accepted. The area that the French Assembly covered is much wider than the area that our conference covers. The French Assembly wanted to bring about unity of the French people in Political, Social and religious

fields. For us it is necessary to think how to bring about social and religious unity among the people. Since our interest is to bring about the social and religious unity of the people keeping aside the political aspect at this juncture, we have to see what did the French Assembly really do in matters of social and religious unity of the people. The French Assembly had issued three declarations which made the social and religious policy of the French Assembly clear. The first declaration was issued on 17th June, 1789. This declaration was about the Varnashrama Dharma that was in practice in the society of France. As it was told earlier that the French Society was of Traivarnikas. In the first declaration the system of three Varnas was abolished and the society of France was made of only one Varna. Not only this but the sitting arrangement was differently made in the assembly of France that was also abolished by the assembly. The second declaration was about the priests, preachers(preceptors) of the religion. Their appointment or removal was not the authority of the nation but it was the monopoly of the Pope who belonged to the other nation. The preceptor whom the Pope appointed used to become the preceptor whether he was qualified or not. By this declaration this religious monopoly was abolished. The power of appointing these men deciding their qualification, salary etc. was given to the National Assembly. Third declaration was neither on political nor on economic and religious matter. That was of general nature. How and on what basis the social reconstruction should be made was its subject. From this point of view this third declaration was more important than the other two. Nay this declaration was the king of other two declarations. This declaration is known in human history as the declaration of man's birth rights. This declaration has become immortal not only in the history of France but in the history of all civilised nations. All other nations of Europe have given first importance to this declaration in their political systems. Thus this declaration has made revolution not only in France but it has been the cause of revolution worldwide. There are 17 articles in this declaration the important among them are:

- (1) All men are born equal and they will remain so until their death. Sometimes some exception can be made in implementing these rights when the welfare of the people requires it, otherwise this equality of rights must remain.
- (2) To maintain these rights mentioned above must be the objective of the government.
- (3) The entire people are the claimants of these rights in their motherland. If some rights of an individual or of a group of individuals or of a class of people are not given by the people (subjects) then those cannot be restored to them on any other ground like the ground of politics or religion.
- (4) An individual has full freedom to behave as per his birth rights. A limit can be put to it if it comes in the way of exercising his right or rights. This limit can be decided by the laws of the state. This limit cannot be decided either by religion or by any other agency.
- (5) Things which are detrimental to the social well-being those alone can be prevented. People must be free to exercise those rights over which there are no legal restrictions. Similarly the things which have not been made completely by law nobody should compel anybody to do that compulsorily.
- (6) The law does not mean the restrictions put by a particular class. What kind of law it should be is to be decided by the people or its representatives. This law whether it is protective or administrative should be applicable to all equally. Since whole system stands on the principle of equality of all it equally deserves for prestige and honour, places of position and power and profession. If any distinction is made in this connection it is only because of difference in their merit and not because of their birth.

I think this today's meeting of ours should keep the image of the French National Assembly before our eyes and to follow the path which this assembly showed to France for its progress and the path which has been accepted by almost all advanced nations. We must follow this path for the progress of Hindu

society and destroy the system that prevents the inter-caste marriages and inter-communication between the individuals of different castes (from Beti bandi to Bhethi Bandi). By destroying various Varnas we must make the Hindu society a system of one Varna. Without this neither untouchability will go nor the equality will be established. Now some of us will feel that it is enough for us if we are free to be associated with others. We have nothing to do with the system of Varnas. If it remains as it is what harm is there? In my opinion this view is wrong. Some people will say that by keeping the Varnashrama system as it is if we make efforts to eradicate only the untouchability it will be easier for us. For the progress of man as it is the need of the efforts of some external nature it is also necessary that there should be some inner instinct or desire. It is doubtful whether man will do any efforts without instinct or desire. If any great work is to be done there should also be equally great desire to do that work. While desiring to do a work we should not worry whether we will accomplish that work or not we should be ashamed if we entertain a low aim while planning for the work. If our aim is higher we should not be ashamed of our failure. Today we are Atishudras; if untouchability goes then we will be the Shudras. Our conversion from Atishudras to Shudras does not mean that untouchability has completely gone. Had untouchability gone by removing the restrictions of association between touchables and untouchables I would not have said anything against the Varna system. Gentleman if you want to kill the serpent there is no use of hitting its tail you must break its head. Untouchability is the by-product of the Varna system. Hence we must attack the Varna system which is the root cause of untouchability.

We Must See Where Lies

The Death of Whom and Attack that cause.

Bhim hit Duryodhana on his thighs with club and killed him. Had Bhim hit Duryodhana on his head Duryodhana would not have died because his death was only in his thighs and not in his head. You know how the efforts of the doctor go

waste if he does not do the diagnosis of the disease appropriately. Similarly there are many failures in removing the social diseases for lack of not understanding the disease properly. Such examples are not recorded in history, therefore, we do not find these for our study. However I have read one example in history which I will narrate here to you. In Rome, an ancient nation of Europe, there were two classes called Patrician and Plebian. Of these two Patrician were regarded as people of higher Varna whereas Plebian were regarded as the people of lower class. All power was vested in Patrician people and on the strength of that they used to treat the Plebian people ignobly. On the basis of their unity Plebeians insisted that there should be written laws so that they can remain free from the whims and the fancies of the Patricians. The Patricians accepted this suggestion. Accordingly, they prepared a chart of twelve laws. But this did not relieve them from their trouble. It did not because the officers implementing the laws were all Patricians not only this but the chief officer of the Roman nation called as Tribune was also a Patrician. Though the laws were the same while implementing the laws discrimination was made. Ultimately the Plebeians suggested that instead of one Tribune there should be two tribunes one from the Patricians elected by them and one from the Plebeians elected by the Plebeians. This demand was also accepted by the Patricians. The Plebeians were very happy thinking that they have attained their objective. But their happiness was ephemeral. Among the Romans there was a practice that nothing should be done unless approved by their tutelar village deity called Delphi. According to this practice if selected Tribune is not approved by the Delphi then they needed to elect some other person as a Tribune who will be accepted by Delphi. The priest who used to obtain the decision of Delphi was again a Patrician. According to the Roman system the priest must be one who was, the son born to the parents who had married according to the Roman system of marriage called Conferacio. This marriage system prevailed only among the Patricians. Therefore, the priest of the Delphi used to be always a Patrician. The result of this system was that if the Plebian elected a strong

man as their Tribune the deity never approved his selection. The Delphi accepted that Plebian who was yes-man of the Patricians. What did the Plebian gain then by getting a right to elect one Plebian out of two? The answer is nothing. Their efforts did not fructify only because they did not understand the cause of their problem. Had they understood it then they would have insisted that they must have their say in the appointment of the priest of Delphi. We also while struggling against the untouchability must find the real cause of its end. Otherwise we may commit mistake.

**Do Not Be Under the Wrong Impression That
Mere Social Communication With the Caste Hindus
Is The End Of Untouchability.**

You should know that by mere lifting the ban on untouchability the untouchability will not go. At the most untouchability practised outside the home will go. But the untouchability practised at home will remain as it is. If the untouchability practised at home is to go then the ban on inter-caste marriage must go. There is no other go. Lifting the ban on inter-caste marriage is the only path to equality. When the main discrimination is removed the minor discriminations will automatically go. But if we remove the minor discrimination it does not mean that it will help in removing the main discrimination. All other minor discriminations have occurred because of one major discrimination and that discrimination is the ban on inter-caste marriage. Once this ban is lifted up then all other discriminatory practices will cease to be in existence automatically. Unless this happens the cause of untouchability will remain with no attack on it.

Who Will Accomplish This Task?

This responsibility will not be shouldered by the Brahmins is the truth that need not be told to anybody. So long as the Varna system continues till then the superiority of the Brahmins is bound to continue. Normally nobody gives up his superior position voluntarily. The Brahmins have enjoyed their sovereign power over others for centuries together. There

is no possibility that the Brahmins by giving up such position will accept the position of equality. The love for nation among the Samurais of Japan cannot be found among the Brahmins of India. The Samurais of Japan sacrificing their selfish interest showed their sense of sacrifice for the cause of unity among the Japanese and this kind of sacrifice for the cause of peoples' unity in India is not possible for the Brahmins' of India. It is doubtful whether Non-Brahmins will also do that. The Non-Brahmin class means the Maratha and such other castes. This is a middle class between the power wielding class and the powerless class. For power-wielding class it is possible to do some sacrifice and show the sense of some generosity. This class which is without power is always an ambitious class. Because this class is often interested in bringing about social change (revolution). This may be for its selfish interests. But this class is more interested in ideals than in its selfish interests. Non-Brahmin class is a middle class placed between the upper class and the lower classes. Therefore, this class is devoid of generosity of one class and ideal of another class. Therefore, this class of Non-Brahmins instead of claiming equality with the Brahmins wishes to protect its rights from the untouchables. Therefore, this class of Non-Brahmins is not much helpful for the cause of social revolution. Therefore, for the work of eradicating untouchability and establishing equality we cannot expect much help from them. We have to do it by ourselves only. We are born to do this work should be the ideal before us; this is a merit that we have to earn by doing this work.

It Is a Work of Self-Elevation

And hence it must be taken on us to remove the hurdles in our work. It can be easily understood how the untouchability has poisoned our food. We know it well that once upon a time our people were recruited in the army in a big way. Military service of our people was in reality their Vatan and it easily solved their problem of earning their livelihood. The other people by getting their entry into the services of Army, Police department, in courts and in other offices are leading their life very happily. But we will not find any untouchable in these services even as exception. This Non-entry does not mean that

our entry is prevented by law. All these services are open to us by law. But the high Caste Hindus regard us as untouchables and low. Therefore, the government raises the hands up in matters of our entry into the government services. Due to the stigma of the untouchability attached to us we are not in a position to enter into any other profession also, because high Caste Hindus will not purchase any commodity touched by us. Untouchability is thus the cause of our degradation and grinding poverty. It is the untouchability that has brought us to this stage of degradation. If we have to come up from this helpless condition of slavery we must work ceaselessly to end this age-old socio-economic and religious slavery.

As It is the work of Self-Elevation

It is also the work of National Progress

There is no other go except destroying the untouchability which is integrated with four Varnas. In the mutual struggle for life any struggling society needs its resources and among the resources its moral base is an important source of its strength in struggle. Everybody must admit that the society in which its moral base is such because of which oneness or unity in that society is not possible and that base is regarded as good and the precepts because of which the society can become unified and one but those precepts are prohibited in practice such a society can never succeed in its life's struggle. On the contrary the principles that will unite the people are accepted as good principles and the ideas that will divide the people are regarded as worthless ideas that society is bound to succeed in its life struggle. It is this rule that applies perfectly well to the Hindu society. The system of four Varnas is a dividing system and the system of one Varna is a uniting system. When we see this with our open eyes what is the use of praising the system of four Varnas. It is due to this system of four Varnas the Hindu society has been suffering defeats. If this precarious situation is to be avoided then we must break the system of four Varnas and make the Hindus a society of one Varna. But this alone is not sufficient. When we break the four Varnas we must also break the inequality preached and practised by the

Varna system. Many people ridicule the principle of equality. Naturally no man is similar to or equal with another man. Some one is physically very huge, while another is very thin-statured, someone is very brilliant by birth whereas some are average in their faculty of knowing. Thus in the opinion of some people it is wrong to regard all men as equal when they are born unequal. But here we are constrained to say that these half-knowledged people have not made the proper efforts to understand the real meaning of the principle of equality. Without keeping the acquisition of power on birth, on wealth or on any other thing if it is kept on the basis of merit it is the meaning of the principle of equality. The man who is devoid of good qualities, is of dirty habits and is evil-designed how can such a man be equal with a man who has good qualities, is a man of clean character and well-behaved? Those who are equal in qualities must be treated as equals. This definition of equality should be applied while giving the position of power and is quite appropriate. However it is also equally essential to treat all men as equal, however unequal they may be before their innate qualities grow and make them qualified to hold power. In the thought of sociology for the growth of the innate qualities in man the role of the social system is immense. If the slaves are always treated as unequal there will grow the only qualities among them which will be useful only to their slavery and they will never be qualified to hold the position of power. Similarly, if a clean man keeps an unclean man always at a distance and never comes in his contact then that unclean man will always remain unclean. If the criminal tribes are always kept away from the contact of civilized societies then these criminal tribes will always remain uncivilized. These above mentioned examples will prove that without equality the man's inborn qualities will never develop towards making him a civilized man. If it is true that without equality the inborn qualities in man will not grow similarly without equality the natural qualities in man will not produce anything much useful. On one hand the inequality in Hindu society arrests its progress and keeps the man dwarf. On the other hand this inequality imbibing in individual does not allow the

individuals to be useful to the society. In this way the system of Chatur Varna is making the Hindu society weak and powerless. If we want to make the Hindu society strong then we must break the system of four Varnas and make it of one Varna basing it on the principle of equality. Our work of eradicating the untouchability is not a different work from the work of making the Hindu society strong. Therefore, I say that as our work is the work of self-elevation it is also the work of our nation building.

This work has been begun to bring about the real social revolution – nobody should think that this game has been suggested to satisfy the melodious sound of the mind. This work has the base of the feelings and these feelings are the power to encourage this work, therefore, it is not possible now to arrest the progress of this work by anybody. The work of the social revolution is beginning here from this day. I pray the Almighty God that this social revolution must come about peacefully. More than us it is the responsibility of our adversaries to help us while bringing about this social revolution and none should doubt this. Whether this social revolution is going to be violent or non-violent will entirely depend upon the behaviour of the touchables. Some people blame the French National Assembly of 1789 for its tyrannical practices. But they forget one thing and that is that if the King of France had not given the people humiliating treatment, if the higher classes had not opposed the commoners, had they not made efforts to put down the commoners by taking the help of foreign powers the National Assembly of France would not have treated the higher classes tyrannically in its work of revolution and the work of social Revolution would have been completed peaceful. We are telling the same thing to our opponents that they should not oppose us in our work. Do not attack us by taking the help of foreign government or of other religions. Discard the Shastras, follow the path of justice and we are sure that we will complete this programme quite peacefully.

Damodar Hall Poybawadi,
Parel, Mumbai - 12

To, Shri

At _____, Taluka _____, District _____

The cause of writing this letter is for making the permanent provision of supplying money to the paper Bahishkrit Bharat a press fund has been founded. The causes of raising this fund have been discussed in details in the information attached herewith in the paper, in order to bring about your progress the Bahishkrit Bharat will have to confront both the government and the touchables and it is impossible to get any help from the touchable Hindus and as well as from the government. You must help the paper which is struggling for your cause. Hence I request you to contribute to this fund as much as you can on behalf of all the people of your village. If not more at least Rs. 10 should be contributed by each village. The work of social service which the Bahishkrit Bharat has rendered so far by taking this into account I expect that the people should contribute to the fund in their own way. With this expectation I take your leave.

Yours Obedient Servant,
Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar
M.A., Ph.D., D. Sc, Bar-at-Law,
M.L.C.

Special Note:

I have appointed some people to collect money for this fund. I have given them the right to issue receipt. Interested people can give donation to these people but they should not forget to take the receipt from them. Those who find it difficult to come in contact with these people can send their money order directly to me.

Suggestion to the Subscribers

Money order or correspondence should be addressed to the Manager, Bahishkrit Bharat. Do not fail in mentioning your

register number. Unless the ticket of one anna is sent the letter will not be replied.

BAHISHKRIT BHARAT

(Untouchable India)

Dr. Ambedkar's Appeal

Is Not the Debt to Bahishkrit Bharat A Worthy Debt?

This writer is happy to state that today the paper Bahishkrit Bharat completes one year of its existence. From the next issue it enters into its next year and like the first year it will continue its publication this year also is the expectation of this writer. No sailor without examining his boat properly will make his entry into the stormy sea. The storm which the Bahishkrit Bharat produced in Hindu society in Maharashtra is clear like the broad day sunlight to the notice of the people. In such a stormy situation how can a present writer take the responsibility of running this paper without sufficient quantity of resources at his disposal? Therefore, before the end of the first year and the beginning of the second year,

It is better to see the present condition of 'Bahishkrit Bharat' and by presenting its condition to the untouchable classes it is necessary to make them aware of their responsibility towards the paper.

The present day condition of Bahishkrit Bharat is very much precarious and this writer feels it very much unhappy to bring this to the notice of the untouchable classes. If we take the account of income and expenditure of the paper Bahishkrit Bharat the paper is under the debt of Rs. 500/- In fact there is no need for the paper to be under this kind of condition. For any paper there is the Editor, his assistant, and peon etc. and these insist that they should be regularly paid. Even the bigger papers established for a great cause are also not free from the problem. However, the paper Bahishkrit Bharat is in one

exception to all other papers in this matter. The Editor and other assistants have not been given a single penny for the whole year. Printing and postage were the only two expenditure aspects of the paper. Another expenditure aspect was the rent of the office and the payment of a servant. The expenditure of these last two items was almost paltry sum. The office rent for the whole year was Rs. 205 $\frac{1}{2}$ and Rs. 98 are shown as the expenditure on the peon. This shows that there is no other paper in Maharashtra which is functioning as miserly as the paper 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. In spite of all this kind of miserly functioning the Bahishkrit Bharat has incurred the debt of Rs. 500/- and if this condition continues then the burden of debt will go on increasing. If this debt goes on increasing then we will have to close the paper or we will have to do something by which we will recover its losses.

Due to the injustice of Hinduism, which is very old religion, we are regarded as untouchables by the thoughtless high Caste Hindus who are not even afraid of world-creator. So long as these high Caste Hindus are going to be there the untouchables are bound to exist in a miserable condition. Because of this selfish injustice done to the untouchables the untouchables have remained socially, economically, politically and religiously in a low condition. Under the English rule nobody's rights are normally trampled. The doors of schools and colleges are open to all. Similarly all are free to utilise the public resources. Though this is true but due to the existing social system in India the untouchables are not free to make use of even the negligible public facility. Though this is the difficulty that untouchables confront they should not be disappointed thinking that this is their fate. They should be prepared to make determined efforts to struggle to gain their deprived rights. This struggle is possible only when there is unity and strength among the untouchables. To produce unity and strength we must keep our efforts continued to create awakening among our people. Without this the people will not understand the condition in which they are placed and who is responsible for

that. Similarly we must see the difficulties our people face in matters of education; whether they are entering into the government services or not; whether they get the government forest land for cultivation or not. Unless these problems are brought to the notice of the government the government will not get the idea of these problems. Now we have opened the problem of Mahar Vatan; the question of public water tanks and the public temples for the use of untouchables. By hearing the opinion of the government and the Caste Hindus on these issues if we keep our efforts on in refuting their opinion it is likely that we may gain something in these issues. But to turn the table in our favour through our propaganda we must have a paper like the Bahishkrit Bharat which can do its job fearlessly. The above mentioned explanation will prove it clearly how there is a need of the paper like Bahishkrit Bharat to serve the cause of the untouchables. No wise man will say that nothing will happen if the paper is closed. If it is the opinion that the Bahishkrit Bharat must continue then

There Must be some arrangement to continue it permanently

The Bahishkrit Bharat can continue by two measures. One is to increase the number of subscribers.

The present writer fails to understand why there should be the dearth of the subscribers. One thing is true that Bahishkrit Bharat does not come out in time and if it comes out it does not reach the subscriber in time. Though this charge is acceptable to the present writer it is not so due to either laziness or due to other reasons. In case of other papers there is the aid of assistant editors and from outside writers to assist the Editor. There through a kind of division of labour the writing work is done timely. Similarly to look after the managerial work there is a separate managerial staff. Therefore, the work is done in time. Had this been the condition of Bahishkrit Bharat it would have come out quite in time and regularly. It must be told to the people that the financial condition of the Bahishkrit Bharat does not permit us to appoint an assistant to the Editor. Nor could we get anybody from the

untouchable community who could do this work free of cost. Whether it is due to the mature writing of the Editor or for want of urge to do some social work outside writers did not come forward to contribute their writing to the Bahishkrit Bharat. Under the circumstances the Editor alone had to do the writing for all the 24 columns. In addition to this the Editor of the Bahishkrit Bharat has his own business of earning his subsistence. Not only this but he has to look after the growing work of the public body like the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha. By doing all this work he has to do the work of the Editor. While doing all these multifarious activities if his editorial work is delayed sometimes the readers should excuse him for the delay in bringing out the issue. The manager of the Bahishkrit Bharat is not a paid servant. By taking care of his own earning work elsewhere he has to do the managerial work of the Bahishkrit Bharat. In case he fails to do the managerial work of the paper in time it is not his fault. It is the existing condition which is responsible for this. It is, therefore, necessary that the readers should bear this in mind. Those who are not satisfied with these explanations our question to them is that whether there is nothing in Bahishkrit Bharat that can compensate the inadequacies mentioned above? The Bahishkrit Bharat must not be coming out timely. Has the Bahishkrit Bharat accepted the system of devoting 4 pages to the advertisement out of its total 8 pages? It is a matter of great pride for us to state that we have dedicated all the eight pages to our readers (subscribers). We have not even touched the bad advertisements. As far as the quality of the paper is concerned nobody will say that it is a negligible paper. There are a few standard papers in Maharashtra and the Bahishkrit Bharat is one of them. Other papers have already given their testimony on the standard of Bahishkrit Bharat. When this is so some people unnecessarily grumble over the irregularity of the paper. We see no much substance in it. Indifference in social work among the untouchables is the genuine cause of the deplorable condition of the Bahishkrit Bharat. Had there been no indifference towards social work among the untouchables the Bahishkrit Bharat, instead of suffering losses would have

been a magic wand. The society of untouchables is very large in population. The Bahishkrit Bharat is a paper which completely devotes itself to the problem of the untouchables and it is run by a person who belongs to them. There was no difficulty in purchasing at least one paper by the untouchables of each village in common. The present writer had expected not much right from the beginning. The community of untouchables is the community of ignorant people. There are very few people among them who can read. And the present writer was aware of this reality. However his expectation was that at least the teachers class from the untouchable community will come forward to patronise this paper. Had they done this the Bahishkrit Bharat would not have suffered from deficiency. But the teaching community which has newly emerged from the untouchable community did not do its duty. Almost 75 percent of the teachers of the untouchable community are not the subscribers of the Bahishkrit Bharat. And those who are the subscribers think that the paper has been started to earn money by its founders. A teacher after receiving some issues, when an issue was sent by VPP refused to receive it. After some days he himself sent a money order of Rs. 2 and 14 annas and stated that he had deducted 2 annas as a cost of money order and requested that the paper may be sent to him regularly. As a matter of fact he should have sent Rs. 3 and 4 annas to recover the total cost. The complaint was made to him for the loss of 6 annas. When we sent the first issue we had stated in that, that the issue has been sent to him with the expectation that he will become the regular subscriber of the paper. If he is unable to become the subscriber he should say so by writing to the Editor. If nothing is communicated to the Editor then it will be presumed that he is ready to become the subscriber and the paper will be sent to him regularly. But very few took cognisance of this suggestion. There is only one exception to this and it is the famous cricketer Shri Balu Babaji Palavankar who wrote to us that we should not send the issue to him. Though we felt for it but this at least saved us from incurring the expenditure. Our subscribers should have known that the Editorship of the Bahishkrit Bharat is not a money

making business. He has taken a vow to produce awakening among the untouchable masses. This kind of treatment to a paper which has come into existence with some social commitment is improper.

Where this kind of miserliness and indifference is seen among the teachers there it is wrong to expect that the Bahishkrit Bharat will get expected number of subscribers from them. Since there is a disappointing situation to increase the number of subscribers we have to find out some other means for the survival of the Bahishkrit Bharat. The plan that we suggest is that we must have our own printing press. To implement the idea of owning the press we must have an amount of Rs. 40,000/- In a way this amount seems to be very big but when we consider the strength of the population of the untouchable community it is almost a negligible amount. There is a population of one lakh Mahars in the city of Bombay alone. In the cities like Pune, Sholapur etc. there is a Mahar population of 20,000 in these cities each. If each individual decides to contribute one rupee we can easily collect Rs. 1 Lakh and 40 thousand. If we include the population of villages the things become even easier. Now on this some people will argue that why should we need such a big press, even a small press will serve our purpose. Our idea is that we should not confine our activity merely to the printing of our newspaper then only Rs. 5000 will suffice our purpose. The present writer's planning for the press is in addition to printing the paper we should earn some profit so that there will not be any danger of incurring losses. If we wish to earn profit even after deducting the cost expenditure then we will need a big press. By planning a small press our trouble will increase with no gain in it. Hence the present writer has planned for a big press. Some mischievous people raise fund and swallow it. This does not mean that all those who raise funds are mischievous people. The press thus established on the people's money is not going to be the private property of anybody. If our press activity produces any surplus money it is going to be people's money and hence it will be spent only on welfare of the people. The present writer feels that there will be none who will doubt the

bonafide of the present writer. Our urge to the people is that they should properly judge the work plan we have proposed to undertake. Without their proper ascertainment they should not come forward to render their financial help to our project. For any public work the need for public assistance is must.

For performing any Yadnya there is a need of the rice. As this is the truth it is also the truth that for any public work we also need money. There is no tree without water and there is no work without money. Since there is a determination to do the work hence the present writer has no hesitation to appeal the people for money. The only question is that whether the people for whom these efforts are going on are prepared to do the needed sacrifice?

According to Mahabharata;

To repay the debt of the gods the man should perform Yadnya; to repay the debt of the Rishis one should study the Vedas; to repay the debt of the father one should perform Pitrayadnya and to repay the loan of the people he must love all beings(compassion). In all these debts the compassion for all is the superior act of repaying.

It must be noted here that all other debts are ambiguous and are of doubtful validity in their results but the repaying debt to the people is a real step of taking the people towards their onward march of progress.

The man who has acquired intellect, wealth, and strength must use these to make the ignorant man awakened, sorrowful man happy and the weak man sheltered. This is the real act of earning the merit and this has been told in the religion. It is this kind of work which is needed for the self-elevation. Individual progress is not possible without the progress of the society. If the environment around us is polluted how is it possible for an individual to remain in purity and make progress? Man cannot break his relations with society because he has to spend his whole life with other beings in society. It is because of his fellow beings he spends his life in their association. He has, therefore, to endure the results of the

environment around him. As far as the material well-being is concerned one man cannot enjoy his well-being unless all have made some progress. Where all individuals are rotting in poverty there nobody can acquire richness. Therefore, while doing any philanthropic work one should think that he is doing that work not for the sake of earning religious merit but it is the work of his self-elevation. Once an individual knows why this service to the people is essential he will also know the amount of his efforts in proportion to the condition of the society. If the condition of the society is more precarious the individual efforts to improve the condition must be more strenuous. Without this the improvement in society is not possible. If the condition in society is more advanced the burden of responsibility over the individual is reduced. Unfortunately the idea of social responsibility is more deep rooted in Brahmin society compared to untouchable communities. Every individual among the Brahmins by his education and wealth is capable to protect his self-interests.

It is perhaps due to this fact that the Brahmins have been asked to repay only three debts. The debt to the people(society) is not included in that, however the Brahmins, inspite of this, are much eager to do the work of their people. This is not the case with the untouchables. For the work of the society whatever sacrifice that was possible has been made by the present writer. He is neither a ruler of the princely state nor a fief-holder. Some one had appropriately described about him that he neither owns farm nor owns the house. He declined the offer of a government job of Rs. 2500/- that the government had offered to him. Instead in order to keep himself free to do the social service opted for the profession of a lawyer which depends much upon the goodwill of the touchables. He has undertaken the work of showing the socio-religious defects in existing society. Therefore, the people who call themselves as nationalists and the lovers of the religion are attacking him constantly and he is enduring their attacks every now and then. Due to the justification of his views and behaviour as per those views many of his old friends have left him and it is a loss to that extent to him in his profession. Without any profit not

even of a single pie he has run the paper Bahishkrit Bharat for one year and he has done the writing of columns after columns single handedly and has done the work of awakening the people. While doing this he neither cared for happiness nor pleasure nor amusement or nor for his family. He worked for day and night. Not only this but Mrs. Ramabai Ambedkar who worked hard to maintain the family while he was away from the country for his higher education and even after returning to homeland I found very little time to pay attention to his family and she is still working hard to take care of the family.

While doing all this he does not think that he has done anything much. On the contrary it was his good fortune that he is born among those people to whom the services of a man like him are needed very much. On the contrary he is totally aware that what a man like him is expected to do for a society like the society of the untouchables. His only expectation is that every individual in untouchable society should also know something about this responsibility. The work of the untouchables is not the work of one man and one man cannot do this. It can be done if all come forward to support this work. The present writer sincerely hopes that the untouchable brothers will keep this view seriously in mind.



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(3) Gadgebuwa saheb

(4) Govind Nawalkar

(5) Shivatarkar Rashu.

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